

King receives Arab Fund general manager

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein received on Monday the general manager of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, Abdul Latif Al Hamad, at Bab Al Salam Palace. King Hussein commended the fund's services and activities in the Arab World and Jordan, particularly in water-related matters. The King conferred upon Mr. Hamad The Al Kawkab Medal of the First Order. The audience was attended by Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf.

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Israel detains dozens of Palestinians

AL FAWAR (AFP) — The Israeli army detained dozens of Palestinians Monday during a dawn sweep through the West Bank refugee camp of Al Fawar, witnesses said. The camp located south of Hebron was sealed off by the army for some five hours during the search, the witnesses said. The army did not immediately comment on the operation. Clashes erupted last week after the army arrested several Palestinians in the Ramallah area of the West Bank in response to increased incidents of stone and firebomb throwing against Israelis.

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Annan warns Baghdad against backsliding on inspection deal

Security Council resolution expected to call for 'very severe consequences' in case Iraq violates accord

Combined agency dispatches

U.N. SECRETARY General Kofi Annan warned that if the agreement he reached with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein breaks down, Washington will have an easier time winning support for a military strike.

"The next few months will tell," he said in an interview with Time Magazine. "If Iraq were to break this agreement, I think that the attitude on the Security Council will be quite different and that it may be much easier for the U.S. to get a consensus to strike."

"I think Iraq knows that too," he said. Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said Monday his country would respect its agreement with the United Nations on unfettered access for weapons inspectors.

"We signed the agreement with the U.N. We are going to implement it no matter the resolution," he said on the U.S. television network CNN.

The Security Council is expected to vote Monday on a resolution warning

Iraq of very grave consequences if it violates the agreement on inspections of all its suspect sites, diplomats said.

Also in Baghdad, Mr. Aziz insisted again Sunday that Iraq would respect the deal, said Russian envoy Viktor Posvalyuk, who has been in Baghdad since Jan. 27 to avert U.S. military action.

"I received today also again assurances from the Iraqi side that they intend to implement seriously everything they have signed with the secretary general of the United Nations," the Russian envoy said after meeting Mr. Aziz.

Richard Butler, head of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) doing the inspections, said Sunday that inspection teams will be resuming work "fairly soon."

"If they keep their promise, our access will actually be improved," he told ABC Television.

The U.N. Security Council was expected to adopt a resolution later Monday warning Iraq of "very severe consequences" if it

blocks U.N. arms inspectors, diplomats said.

The diplomats spoke after the 15-member Security Council held two hours of closed-door discussions on a draft resolution.

The council was to meet again later on Monday to vote on the resolution following consultations with capitals, the diplomats said.

After the meeting, Britain and Japan expressed hopes that the council would adopt a resolution threatening "severe consequences" if Baghdad violated an accord on arms inspections.

British Ambassador Sir John Weston and Japanese envoy Hisashi Owada, the co-sponsors of a draft resolution being considered by the 15-nation council, expressed optimism that the text could be adopted later in the day.

However, other envoys including Russian Ambassador Sergei Lavrov expressed reservations about opening the door to automatic U.S. military strikes against Iraq without further consultation by the



United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan arrives at U.N. headquarters Monday. Annan is expected to lead a mission to Iraq that will inspect the deal to open presidential palaces, the Security Council meets to agree on a resolution which satisfies Washington's demand for a stern warning (AP photo)

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Arabs setting up 'air bridge' of solidarity with Iraq

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Arab states are building an "air bridge" of solidarity with Iraq, flying in several plane loads of aid for the first time since an embargo was imposed on Baghdad for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Two planes from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) loaded with a total of more than 80 tonnes of food, milk, clothing and medicine are due to fly to Baghdad on Tuesday, along with a Moroccan aircraft carrying 10 tonnes of medicine.

"The fact these planes are being sent is proof that Arab sentiment about the sufferings of the Iraqis is growing stronger each day," said an Arab diplomat posted in Iraq's capital.

"The recent [Iraq-U.N.] crisis has pushed the people of the Arab World in the right direction and encouraged them to work to restore Arab solidarity," he said, asking not to be named.

Since Dec. 25, Djibouti, Egypt, Qatar and the UAE have all sent aid planes to Baghdad, along with Russia and Iceland.

The planes have been allowed to travel to Saddam

International Airport with authorization from the U.N. committee which oversees the sanctions against Iraq, including an air embargo.

Western diplomats here said the Sanctions Committee, which is also authorising Jordan's national carrier this year to fly Iraqi pilgrims to Islam's holiest sites in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, has been easing its stand.

In the UAE, the government-controlled Red Crescent Society, whose latest flights were awaiting clearance to overfly neighbouring Saudi Arabia, said its aid was part of an air bridge.

"It is part of an air bridge to despatch humanitarian supplies to the brotherly Arab country in line with instructions from President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan," said an official from the Red Crescent Society.

"There could be more shipments to ease the suffering of the people there... you can say it is an integrated programme to help the Iraqis," he told AFP in Abu Dhabi.

The UAE organisation already sent two plane loads of

relief supplies to Iraq on Feb. 21.

The Red Crescent Society's chairman, Khalifa Al Suweidi, said that the organisation was also considering opening an office in Baghdad to oversee aid distribution.

"There is a need for such a centre because of the increasing supplies to Iraq. It will be the first Arab charity group to open such an office in Baghdad" since the 1991 Gulf war over Kuwait, he said.

Iraqi officials said a Moroccan plane was due in on Tuesday, rather than Monday as originally planned, and that other Arab countries were expected to follow suit.

On Sunday, an Egyptian Air Force plane landed in Baghdad with 30 tonnes of medicine for Iraqi children as well as a delegation of 11 trade unionists, actors, MPs and journalists.

In a show of solidarity, the delegation visited an orphanage and an arms training centre for Iraqi volunteers.

"We want the whole world to understand: We hate Israel and we hate the United States," said Syrian actress Raghdia who travelled with the Egyptian delegation.

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U.S. lawmaker says U.S. considering ways to oust Iraqi president

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States is considering steps to overthrow Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, including "covert activities," said Senate majority leader Trent Lott on Monday.

As about the need for covert action, Sen. Lott said that it was "probably" necessary since "containment doesn't seem to be doing what we want."

Sen. Lott added that "alternatives" were needed, saying that "if that involves covert activities I think that's fine."

Later Monday, a Senate sub-committee was to stage a hearing on whether "Saddam Hussein can be overthrown."

Meanwhile, U.S. officials discussed military preparations in the Gulf Monday with representatives from countries that have pledged

to provide support for a possible air strike against Iraq, the State Department said.

In a statement, State Department spokesman James Rubin said that during the meeting, "U.S. officials emphasised the importance of continued coalition preparations."

"It is necessary that the international community remain prepared to act forcefully if Baghdad fails to comply with its commitments and obligations," Mr. Rubin said.

But the U.S. remains "hopeful" that Iraq will abide by an agreement signed a week ago by U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan that for the first time opened up eight presidential sites in Iraq to U.N. weapons inspectors.

In radio interview

Only people of country can make changes in its leadership — King

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein said in a radio interview that only the people of a country can change its leadership, in a reference to calls demanding that the U.S. oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

"In my view there is no alternative to dialogue among the concerned parties and I refuse and will fight to my last breath against the idea that any entity

in the world can change or replace the government of another country," the King told Monte Carlo Radio.

"Only the people of the country can make changes in its leadership and therefore I believe dialogue is needed to offer the chance to the concerned parties to express their views openly and reach satisfactory results," he added.

Asked about how Jordan can

remove misunderstanding that mars relations between Jordan on the one hand and Iraq and Syria on the other, King Hussein said: "There is no reason for such clouds which cannot remain and will vanish soon."

Asked if he wishes to send a message to President Saddam Hussein, the King said: "There is no specific message except

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King to visit UAE, Oman to push Jordan's 'direct dialogue' initiative

By Francesca Ciriadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein today starts a five-day visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman to explain his initiative to open a dialogue between arch-foes Washington and Iraq to achieve long-term stability in the region, officials said.

King Hussein, who will be accompanied by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, newly-appointed Royal Court Chief Fayez Tarawneh, and other high-ranking officials, is scheduled to hold talks with UAE President Sheikh Zayed

Ben Sultan Al Nahayan on bilateral ties and regional issues.

From there, he is expected to leave for Muscat on Thursday for talks with Sultan Qaboos of Oman.

Jordanian officials said King Hussein was expected to promote his recent initiative to launch a dialogue between Iraq and the United States in the wake of Baghdad's recent standoff with the U.N. over weapons inspections.

"Direct dialogue between the concerned parties is far better and more productive than dealing through inspectors, monitors or following

police-like methods," King Hussein said in an interview with Radio Monte Carlo on Sunday (see separate story).

"I believe there is a need for dialogue to give each party a chance to offer its views and define its stand," he added. "This will pave the way for removing disputes and reaching satisfactory results for all sides," he said.

Jordanian officials said the initiative, proposed by the King to U.S. President Bill Clinton in a recent telephone conversation, has not been rejected out of hand by Wash-

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Israel holds memorial ceremony for seven girls killed at Baqoura

By Alia A. Toukan
Special to the Jordan Times

BAQOURA — Israel held a memorial service yesterday for the seven Israeli schoolgirls shot dead by a Jordanian soldier in Baqoura a year ago.

In a sombre and emotionally charged atmosphere, the families of the victims, survivors of the shooting, and friends first gathered at the scene of the shooting and recounted the events leading up to the incident.

Later, the rest of the commemoration ceremony was continued on the Israeli side of the northern border, less than a kilometre away from the site of the March 13 shooting.

"I extend on behalf of His Majesty King Hussein and the people of Jordan our deepest condolences for the families of the victims," His Royal Highness Prince Ra'd, Chief Chamberlain, said at the ceremony.

"The people of Jordan have always denounced

terrorism in all its forms," said Prince Ra'd. "Let us not allow the great sacrifices of innocent girls and the late [Yitzhak] Rabin, and the Ibrahimi Mosque [massacre] go in vain."

"Let us raise up to the occasion and work towards a comprehensive and lasting peace which is the best guarantee against those who harbour nihilistic and terrorist tendencies," Prince Ra'd told the audience of families and friends of the victims, Jordanian and Israeli officials and members of the press.

The ceremony was also attended by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Minister of Defence Yitzhak Mordechai.

"Let this tragedy be a new beginning to strengthen peace," said Mr. Netanyahu, while Mr. Mordechai insisted that despite the shootings, Israelis and Jordanians

Mordechai distances himself from Misha'al fiasco

BAQOURA — Israeli Defence Minister, Yitzhak Mordechai leader distanced himself on Monday from the Mossad's assassination attempt on Hamas Khaled Misha'al in Amman in September, and said that both countries should look to the future.

"I was not responsible for that operation, and I did everything possible to rebuild the confidence, the honour, and the peace between Jordan and Israel," Mr. Mordechai told the Jordan Times after attending the ceremony commemorating the shooting of seven Israeli schoolgirls by a Jordanian soldier last year.

He stressed that the Misha'al affair "is in the past," and that attempts should be made "to talk about the future."

A.T.

Lebanon rejects Israeli withdrawal conditions

BEIRUT (AFP) — Lebanese leaders on Monday demanded that the international community force Israel to withdraw its troops from south Lebanon, rejecting Israeli feelers over negotiating security arrangements first.

Lebanese President Elias Hrawi called for "the international community to impose on Israel the application of U.N. resolutions" concerning a pullout from south Lebanon, where Israel occupies a self-declared "security zone."

Mr. Hrawi made the remarks in an address opening a regional congress on higher education here, attended by the director general of UNESCO, Federico Mayor Zaragoza. Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Bweiz said that "Lebanon is not ready to

begin negotiations with Israel" to obtain the application of U.N. Resolution 425 stipulating an Israeli troop withdrawal.

In an interview published in the Arabic daily Al Hayat on Monday, Mr. Bweiz rejected any direct talks between Israel and Lebanon over the withdrawal.

The U.N. resolution "does not require security arrangements between Lebanon and Israel but arrangements between Israel and the United Nations, on one side, and Lebanon and the United Nations on the other."

He added that "Israel should inform the United Nations of the date and the parameters of its withdrawal."

"The United Nations should [then] inform

Lebanon that Israel is withdrawing from such and such a place so that Lebanon can take the necessary steps for the deployment of its forces," he said.

Two top aides to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have sent a message to Lebanon through France that Israel will accept U.N. Resolution 425 calling for a withdrawal from south Lebanon, Israeli army radio reported Monday.

Cabinet Minister Danny Naveh and Mr. Netanyahu's diplomatic adviser Uzi Arad met Sunday with French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine and asked him to convey Mr. Netanyahu's message that Israel was prepared to withdraw from south Lebanon, 20 years after it first invaded, as long as Beirut cooper-

Israel calls on Syria to renew peace talks

HAIFA (AFP) — Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai called on Syria Monday to return to peace negotiations broken off two years ago. Mr. Mordechai, urged Damascus to join a renewed peace initiative which would also include efforts to negotiate an Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon. "Parallel to attempts to find a political solution to the south Lebanon issue, I call on Syria to return to the negotiating table," Mr. Mordechai told reporters during a visit to a hospital in the northern port city of Haifa. But Mr. Mordechai stressed that Israel still felt that renewing peace talks with Damascus was a high priority and he warned that the government was prepared "to remain in Lebanon for a long time" if no solution is found to protect northern Israel from attack by Palestinian or Islamist guerrillas based in Lebanon.

demands on its security

But the Israeli premier said the government did not want a "unilateral withdrawal which would increase Hizbollah attacks against Galilee" in northern Israel, according to a statement from his office.

Resolution 425, adopted in March 1978 after Israel first invaded its northern neighbour, calls on it "immediately cease military action against the territorial integrity of Lebanon and to withdraw without delay Lebanese terror

Annan kept tight lid on Baghdad talks — Brahimi

PARIS (R) — When U.N. chief Kofi Annan, a deal in his pocket, was flying back from his peace mission to Baghdad, he joked that his job was not worth the money, his assistant, Lakhdar Brahimi, was quoted on Monday as saying.

"He smiled and told me this: 'Really, my dear Lakhdar, we are not being paid enough for this work. That is really Kofi Annan,'" Mr. Brahimi told the weekly Jeune Afrique in an interview.

Mr. Brahimi, a former Algerian foreign minister,

was among the half-dozen people who accompanied Mr. Annan to Iraq where he won an accord on United Nations arms inspections to avoid U.S.-led military strikes.

He said that Mr. Annan had not sought approval from the United States or any of the other four permanent Security Council members during his talks in Baghdad, and informed them last Monday only after clinching the agreement and before signing it.

"It was a matter of informing, in no case of consulting," he was quoted

as saying. He added that U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright called Mr. Annan on Sunday night to seek information, but Mr. Annan did not disclose what the deal would be.

"I can assure you that neither Mrs. Albright nor anybody, except the Iraqis and ourselves, knew of the details of the accord before it was signed," he told the magazine.

He said the 15 Security Council members received the text of the agreement

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ENSOUR RECEIVES SAUDI AMBASSADOR: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Information Abdullah Ensour on Monday receives Saudi Ambassador to Jordan Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz Sudairi. Dr. Ensour and Mr. Sudairi discussed bilateral relations and means of developing them further (Petra photo)

UJ students begin hunger strike to protest administrative decision

By Hasher Majoka
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Three science students at the University of Jordan began a hunger strike Monday to protest against a faculty decision to place them on disciplinary probation.

Ahmad Rahman Matar, the head of the Islamist-dominated Faculty of Science Student Council, said he and fellow council members Hamza Hasanat and Ehab As'ad decided to go on hunger strike "to force the administration to lift the disciplinary probation imposed" on all three for having screened a video on the life of a Hamas member.

He added that they plan to move the venue of the strike from the Faculty of Science to the university's main gate on Tuesday and "resort to some unorthodox tactics to draw attention to our plight."

"Our aim is to get the probation lifted, to achieve autonomy for student

councils and to ensure non-interference in their affairs," Mr. Matar said. "We also intend to breathe a new life into student activism, not only at the University of Jordan, but at all universities across the country through our protest," he told the Jordan Times.

The dean of the Faculty of Science, Nasser Saleh, refused to comment on the strike.

Mr. Matar said he was given a double warning, while the other two students were given a single warning each. Students are expelled from the university upon receiving the third disciplinary warning.

Furthermore, any student placed on disciplinary probation is barred from running for the student councils, the elections for which are scheduled to be held shortly.

Meanwhile, the University Student Council met yesterday to assess the impact of a new directive issued Sunday which stip-

ulates that the upcoming Student Council elections will be held under the "one person, one vote system."

One council member, who declined to be named, alleged that the new system was being introduced to break the Islamist monopoly in the student councils.

According to a report in the Arabic daily Al Ra'i, the president of the Student Council, Mahmoud Daqoor, said the council was surprised by the decision, which was taken by the president of the university without consulting the student councils. However, Mr. Daqoor added that the directive will not affect the popularity of the Islamists at the university.

Bajis Saleebi, from the Deanship of Student Affairs, told Al Ra'i that the matter was entirely under the president's discretion. He is not required to consult with the student councils in this regard," he said.

Majali meets with new JEA leadership, pledges to strengthen government ties with unions

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday stated that the government will not change the laws governing the professional unions without their involvement and input.

During a meeting with the newly elected president and board members of the Jordan Engineers Association (JEA), Dr. Majali said the government is keen on maintaining and strengthening ties with the unions and will give them unlimited support.

"We are all working to serve the public and the country as a

whole," said the prime minister at the meeting, which was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Information Abdullah Ensour and Minister of Public Works and Housing Nasser Lawzi.

Congratulating new JEA President Husni Abu Gheida and his board on their election, Dr. Majali urged all state institutions to cooperate with the JEA and the other unions to serve the higher national interests.

Mr. Abu Gheida, who was elected Friday, said the association will focus its attention on

developing the profession. He and the prime minister reviewed a number of problems facing the JEA, including administrative and technical difficulties.

The JEA president pledged that the union will maintain its dialogue with the government to find solutions for problems facing Jordanian engineers and the association.

Upon his election for a two-year term, Mr. Abu Gheida said the JEA would try to solve general problems facing engineers but would not refrain from becoming involved in

political activities.

"We do not want to politicise the JEA but we are part of the country and affected by everything that takes place internally and externally," said Mr. Abu Gheida.

He rejected the government's proposed plan of introducing amendments or changing the present unions law, saying that such a step might be disastrous for the profession and the association.

Mr. Abu Gheida, an Islamist, defeated Abdo Ali, a candidate representing a coalition of pan-Arabists and leftists in the

JEA, clinching 3,160 votes to 1,570 for Mr. Ali.

Also on Monday, Dr. Majali paid an inspection visit to the Civil Status and Passports Department, where he met with Minister of Interior Nasser Rashid and Department Director Awni Yervas, who outlined general services to the public.

The prime minister then inspected the various sections of the department and was briefed on the process of issuing passports and family books, as well as identity cards.

Conference on energy planning opens

AMMAN (Petra) — Sixty delegates representing electricity institutions in 14 Arab countries Monday began a five-day conference in Amman to discuss integrated planning for electricity needs and to review progress on "the sustainable energy project," which is sponsored and financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Addressing the opening session, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Mohammad Saleh Horani stated that integrated planning in the electricity sector should lead to sustainable development, the target of the "energy project."

Integrated planning in the energy sector should contribute to solving major social, environmental and economic problems, said the minister, noting that modern technology can help achieve this goal.

Engineer Mohammad Azzam Khamis, Jordan's coordinator for the sustainable energy project, said the project aims at increasing efficiency, rationing energy consumption, and developing alternative sources of energy in the Arab World.

He said the three-year project, which began in 1997, also has the goal of improving the Arab World's energy industry, management of electricity production, and distribution and development of renewable energy.

The delegates will review several working papers dealing with these and other energy-related topics.

The meeting was organized by the UNDP in conjunction with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and the National Electricity Company.

Israeli security cannot be achieved by disregarding commitments — Badran

BRUSSELS (Petra) — Jordan on Monday accused Israel of using the issue of security as a pretext to blackmail the Palestinians and said such behaviour was the main reason for the lack of security and peace in the Middle East.

A statement made available to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, on Monday carried Jordan's views as conveyed by the director of the Department of Palestinian Affairs, Ibrahim Badran, to an international meeting in Brussels held last week to express solidarity with the Palestinian people.

"The banner of security that the Israeli government has been waving should not provide an excuse for the Jewish state to oppress and persecute the Palestinian people in their homeland and should not be a reason for practising terrorism and blackmail," said Dr. Badran.

"The Israeli government should realise that security cannot be achieved by disregarding commitments and agreements, escalating inhuman practices against

the Palestinians, restricting the Palestinian people's movement and imposing a siege on them with the purpose of ruining their economy, keeping thousands of Palestinians detained in Israeli jails, or by carrying out assassinations around the world," said Dr. Badran.

He was reading Jordan's address to the meeting, which was organized by the U.N. Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Arab League, and the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

Dr. Badran said all of these Israeli measures and practices are deepening the feelings of despair and creating a feeling of suspicion that is leading to an atmosphere of renewed conflict.

He said building confidence and establishing peace in its true legal, political and humanitarian ramifications serve as the best means for achieving security and stability in the Middle East.

"Israel should abandon the language of force and end the siege it has been imposing on the Palestinian

people. It should stop changing the demographic, geographic and historic character of the occupied Arab territories and... respect the Fourth Geneva Convention with regard to the treatment of the inhabitants in the occupied Arab territories," he said.

Referring to the status of Jerusalem, Dr. Badran said: "Arab Jerusalem is part of the Palestinian territories occupied in the 1967 war and therefore should be restored to Arab sovereignty in implementation of the principle of exchanging land for peace and should be opened to the followers of the three monotheistic religions."

Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights exist in violation of international law and international legitimacy and contravene the principles of the Madrid Conference and the Palestinian-Israeli accords, he said.

These settlements constitute a grave danger to the region and infringe on the rights of the Palestinian

people, he added.

On the issue of Palestinian refugees, Dr. Badran said "a just and comprehensive peace should take into account U.N. Resolution 194, which provides for the right of the Palestinians to return and receive compensation."

Dr. Badran said there are about 1.4 million Palestinian refugees in Jordan, constituting 40 per cent of the total diaspora living in Arab host countries and Palestine.

He said Jordan spends nearly \$350 million annually on improving educational, health and social services to the refugees, backing the efforts of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in providing for refugees in the agency's fields of operations.

He appealed to donor nations, world organisations and various peace-loving nations to assist UNRWA and enable it to pursue its humanitarian services to the refugees until their problem has been solved.

New service allows cheaper Internet connections

By Ahmed Naser
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Residents in Irbid and Zarqa can now connect to the World Wide Web at local phone rates thanks to local dial-up nodes that FirstNet, an Internet service provider (ISP), has recently started operating in the two governorates.

"Users in Irbid and Zarqa have two different links to our [FirstNet's] mother server in Amman," said Ziad I. Masri, assistant marketing manager of the most recent player in Jordan's Internet industry.

Mr. Masri added that with two separate Internet con-

nections, users in the two governorates can expect a fast and easy dial-up to the ISP, which began operations last October.

"They will not have to queue and compete with Amman users to connect to the Internet. Users in each town have their own connection," he said.

Mr. Masri told the Jordan Times that the two separate circuits will provide connections faster than those available to users based in the capital.

Meanwhile, Electronics and Computers Universe, an Irbid-based computer company, will resell accounts and be responsible for providing technical sup-

port and assistance to FirstNet's customers there.

Electronics told the Jordan Times that users in Irbid will be offered lower rates than subscribers in the capital to encourage them to use the Internet.

Electronics added that the dial-up in Irbid would be better than the one in Amman as a result of the combined benefits of both a new exchange in Irbid, installed by the JTC eight months ago, and the low number of users on the high-speed circuit.

As for Zarqa, the second most populous city in the Kingdom, Mr. Masri said FirstNet is expected to have a similar arrangement with-

in the next few days.

In Aqaba, residents can expect a local dial-up within a month to replace dialling to the mother server in Amman, he told the Jordan Times.

Web users in Amman currently pay an average of JD80 for five hours of Internet browsing. In contrast, users in the United States pay an average of \$20 for a package that includes connection charges and both unlimited phone call charges and Internet browsing.

The Internet craze has not spread Kingdom-wide due to the high costs of dialling Amman-based ISPs and lower standards of living.

what's going on

CONCERTS

* Musical performance by Adib Al Dayekh and Julian Jalaluddin Fais at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

* Musical performance by Qamar Badwan and the band of the National Music Conservatory (presenting songs by Asmahan, Farid Al Atrash, Sayyid Darwish, Abdul Halim Hafiz, and Mohammad Abdul Wahab) at the Royal Cultural Centre on Wednesday, March 4, at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* "The Spanish Contemporary Graphic Art" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman (Tel. 610858), until March 20.

* Private collection of Mamdouh Bisbarat entitled "A Vision, An Identity" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until March 5 (Tel. 643251). Also displaying works by contemporary Arab artists — "The New Collection."



Correction

It is the practice of the Amman Baccalaureate School (ABS) to refrain from publicizing internal school matters. However, in view of the inaccurate and incomplete story that Ms. Alia S. Hamzeh wrote in yesterday's issue of the Jordan Times, the administration of the school feels that a correction should be entered on one important point.

In addition to the destruction of property and unacceptable graffiti, there were ten incidents of attempted arson, tampering with the fire alarm system and the breaking of electrical sockets.

The Amman Baccalaureate School is an educational institution that seeks to set and achieve the highest standards of academic performance and conduct and instill in its students a sense of responsibility and accountability.

Women still fighting uphill battle against discriminatory legislation

This is the first in a series of five articles that the Jordan Times will publish leading up to International Women's Day, observed on March 8.

By Lola Keilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanian women are fighting an uphill battle to amend a tide of discriminatory legislation despite an article in the Constitution that bestowed equal rights on males and females.

But many Jordanian women activists fear their views will not gain much sympathy in Parliament, elected in November and dominated mainly by tribal leaders and conservative lawmakers.

The activists are trying hard to end discrimination against women embedded in five major laws affecting civil rights and day-to-day life.

These laws include the penal code and legislation covering citizenship, civil status, social security, retirement and medical insurance.

"A number of Jordanian laws pertaining to women's rights are contradictory to international agreements signed by the Kingdom," said lawyer Ghosoun Rahhal, whose higher education thesis focused on "Discrimination Against Women in the Penal Code."

Ms. Rahhal, for years a women activist, cited an article in the penal code that discriminates against women — that covering "crimes of honour," defined as the right of a male to kill a

female relative for a suspected illicit relationship.

"The law gives all males certain privileges, as in the so-called 'crimes of honour,' that are not granted to women," she told the Jordan Times.

The law states that if a man sees a female relative or a wife committing adultery and kills her, the judge should take into account the situation and lessen the verdict due to mitigating circumstances. But under a reversed situation, a woman is not allowed to kill an adulterous husband and enjoy the legal backing of mitigating circumstances.

Crimes of honour claim the lives of around 25 women in Jordan every year, a phenomenon that has caused an outcry among world human rights groups.

"Lawyers have tried to widen the scope to mitigating reasons to include not only seeing a woman in bed [with a man], but also to seeing a woman accompanying another male walking in the street," added Ms. Rahhal.

The lawyer said that through studying the courts' verdicts on crimes of honour over the past 15 years, none of the men who killed a female relative had actually seen her committing adultery.

"Nevertheless, this privilege is applied because it relates to 'honour,' which is part of the tribal and rural cultural heritage," Ms. Rahhal said.

In a recent interview, Minister of Justice Riyad Shakkas said the ministry was putting the final touches on a new penal code to offer more protection to women and children who are abused by their

families, including stricter sentences for such honour crimes.

Rihab Kadoumi, a member of a legal commission at the Jordanian National Committee for Women (JNCW), said the group had submitted to the government a proposal for draft laws related to women's rights.

"The issue of 'crimes of honour' is one of them," she said.

"It is unacceptable that a man appoint himself as judge, jury and executioner," Mrs. Kadoumi said. "Those mitigating circumstances excuses should be cancelled."

Article 284 of the penal code law also states that in case of adultery, the husband or wife can file a lawsuit against each other. But if the female is unmarried, the law grants her guardian the right to file a complaint against her or her partner.

"In case the male is unmarried, the law does not grant anyone the right to file a complaint unless it is the father or the guardian of the girl," explained Ms. Rahhal.

Lawyers and activists say discrimination against women in the penal code and personal status law reflected the inherent nature of Jordan's patriarchal tribal society, which exposes women to different forms of oppression.

The citizenship law also discriminates against women. A Jordanian woman can grant neither a foreign husband nor her children Jordanian citizenship.

"We managed, through the efforts of

Princess Basma, to convince the government to add children under 18 to the mother's passport. But we still demand giving children nationality," Mrs. Kadoumi said.

Her Royal Highness Princess Basma is JNCW chairperson.

According to Nadia Shamroukh, vice president of the Jordanian Women's Union, prejudice against women has been manifested by consecutive governments who informed them that authorities will not grant citizenship to foreigners married to Jordanian women because of "political reasons."

"But this is a basic human right for every woman," she said.

Although women have lately been granted the right to add children to their passports, another woman activist, who declined to be named, said they still had to pull some strings before such women could exercise such a right.

"Government employees are unaware of this new law. Therefore, they still refuse to add the name of the children to the mother's passport," said the activist.

Ms. Rahhal said Jordanian law treats married women as minors when acquiring a passport.

"A married woman should submit a signed approval by her husband prior to obtaining a passport, which is exactly like a minor, who should obtain the prior approval of a guardian before a passport is issued," she said. "This procedure is ridiculous."

Mrs. Kadoumi said the JNCW last

year submitted draft proposals to amend this article of the citizenship law.

"We submitted to the government a proposal which states that a woman should have the right to acquire a passport, without prior approval of her husband," she said.

Regarding the retirement law, while a man is entitled to retirement at the age of 60, women have to quit their jobs at the age of 55.

The pension of a man goes to his widow, unmarried daughters, children below 18 years of age and his family when he dies.

But a woman's pension does not go to her children after her death if there is a grandparent or an uncle who can afford to support the children.

"Why should there be such discrimination, when the same amount of money was deducted from all employees during their service, regardless of their sex?" asked Mrs. Kadoumi.

As for the state-run medical insurance, a male employee is entitled to extend his insurance umbrella to his parents, children and wife. But a female civil servant is not entitled to include her parents.

"She can include her husband if he is disabled," said Mr. Rahhal.

But they believe women's hopes to secure improved rights lie in forming a strong lobby to force the government to enact new laws that will eliminate victimisation and discrimination against women.

Schroeder set for party backing to face Kohl

HANOVER, Germany (R) — Germany's opposition candidate Gerhard Schröder immediately began wooing Chancellor Helmut Kohl's natural supporters after triumphing in a state election that he said spelled the end for the West's longest-serving leader.

Mr. Schröder, 53, made a pitch for "the new centre" in German politics after surprising friend and foe with the scale of his reelection victory as premier of Lower Saxony Sunday.

The result effectively secured Mr. Schröder's nomination as the Social Democrats' (SPD) challenger to Mr. Kohl in September's general election. The party, out of power in Bonn for 16 years, was due to nominate him formally Monday.

His only challenger for the ticket, SPD President Oskar Lafontaine, conceded defeat after exit polls predicted that Mr. Schröder had been returned with 48 per cent of the vote, a nearly four-point improvement on his 1994 showing.

"The end of the Kohl era has begun," said Mr. Schröder, a smooth television performer tipped by pollsters as the only politician capable of beating the veteran chancellor.

The Lower Saxony result

was the SPD's best post-war showing in Germany's third-largest state. Provisional final returns gave it 47.9 per cent of the vote to 35.9 for Mr. Kohl's Christian Democratic Union (CDU).

"We will campaign on a platform of modernising the economy and society," Mr. Schröder said.

"I plan to reach out to the leaders of industry and reach a new middle ground with them," he added, repeating the message in a marathon string of interviews after his victory.

Supporters say Mr. Schröder is a breath of fresh air on a stuffy political scene, likening the four-times married leader to U.S. President Bill Clinton and British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Critics call him a media creation lacking a deep-rooted ideology or a party powerbase.

Ever the pragmatist, he has made a bid for the centre ground which actually shifts governments under Germany's proportional representation system. He beams for the cameras in a hard hat in a factory, puffs on a Havana cigar at business dinners and listens compassionately in old folks' homes.

Mr. Schröder's Lower Saxony victory was bad news for Mr. Kohl, who would have preferred to

fight the left-leaning Lafontaine in September's federal election.

"I think, in view of the defeat, there will be a big debate in the CDU starting tomorrow about whether a wounded chancellor is still a useful candidate for September," Mr. Schröder said. "It remains to be decided if the CDU will stick with their candidate."

CDU General Secretary Peter Hintze dismissed speculation that the party would abandon Mr. Kohl. "I can completely rule that out," he said in Bonn.

Mr. Kohl had campaigned hard for the CDU candidate in Lower Saxony, Christian Wulff, whose share of the vote dropped 0.5 per cent from the CDU's 1994 showing.

The Monday meeting of the SPD's national executive had been planned as the forum to choose between Mr. Schröder and Mr. Lafontaine, but the election outcome forced the party's hand.

"I am very happy that we had such a superb result," said Mr. Lafontaine, passing out champagne to journalists outside his house in the western town of Saarbrücken.

"We didn't expect such a great win. I will nominate Gerhard Schröder as our chancellor candidate tomorrow."



Lower Saxony Premier Gerhard Schröder (left) holds a bouquet of flowers as Social Democrat party leader Oskar Lafontaine (right) looks on prior to a party board meeting (Reuters photo)

Deposed Cambodian co-premier to offer no defence at trial

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Deposed Cambodian co-premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh plans to offer no defence when he goes on trial in absentia this week, aides said Monday. "There is no defence," a senior member of exiled prince's cabinet said from Bangkok, reiterating the position that Prince Ranariddh does not recognise the legitimacy of the charges or jurisdiction of the court.

"We don't even plan to have anyone in the courtroom," the official said. "We are just sitting here quietly and we are not going to say anything about it."

Wednesday, Phnom Penh's military court is to try the prince, ousted last July by strongman Hun Sen, on charges of illegally importing weapons related to a seizure last May of two tonnes of arms and ammunition.

The prince's top military commander, Nhiek Bun Chhay, and his chief bodyguard, Thach Seoung, are co-defendants.

The proceedings, in addition to a March 17 trial on charges of colluding with the ousted Khmer Rouge, is part of a four-point Japanese-sponsored peace plan aimed at allowing Prince Ranariddh to return home and participate in July's scheduled elections.

Officials meanwhile confirmed that Nhiek Bun Chhay, former governor of

the northern province of Siem Reap, Serei Kosal and intelligence chief Chao Sambath would also be tried on March 17 on charges of colluding with the Khmer Rouge.

Chao Sambath was killed after the violence last July. His body was found in a shallow grave outside the capital.

If convicted on one or both of the counts, the prince will have to obtain a pardon from his father, King Norodom Sihanouk, in order to be eligible to stand in the July 26 polls. The international community is pushing for the prince, whose royalist FUNCINPEC party narrowly won 1993's historic U.N.-brokered election, to be allowed to return for the election.

Few observers expect the trial to be a fair one and nearly all are betting on a conviction as Cambodia's court system has been roundly criticized for its political bias and lack of independence.

"The chance for a fair trial is absolutely nil," one human rights official said. "There is no chance at all." In both cases, prosecutors have been silent about evidence they intend to present, but following the prince's violent ouster, the government defended its use of military forces in two "white papers" which contain hints of what may be

presented in court.

In the weapons case, the government is expected to rely on witness testimony and documents seized after a Danish-registered freighter called "The Panther" unloaded several large crates addressed to Prince Ranariddh at the southern port of Sihanoukville last May 26.

The crates contained two tonnes of weapons and ammunition from a Polish arms dealer that were identified in customs documents as "spare parts."

The prince admitted to having ordered the weapons but said they were intended for his personal bodyguard unit and were thus legal.

Hun Sen rejected the explanation, saying weapons for bodyguards must be ordered through the defence ministry and the seizure heightened already strong tensions between him and the prince.

Just over a month later, those tensions exploded into open warfare on the streets of the capital, ending the uneasy four-year-old Ranariddh-Hun Sen coalition.

In the white papers, the government has portrayed the purchase as an attempt to arm Khmer Rouge guerrillas and illegal soldiers it accuses the prince and his supporters of bringing into the capital to stage a coup d'état. Prince Ranariddh has vehemently denied those allegations.

French judge summons Diana bodyguard for more questioning

PARIS (AFP) — A French judge probing the death of Princess Diana has summoned the bodyguard Trevor Rees-Jones for more questioning on March 16, investigators said Monday.

Mr. Rees-Jones, 29, the only survivor of the Aug. 31 Paris car crash in which Diana, Princess of Wales and her companion Dodi Fayed were killed, has remembered more of the tragedy, according to Britain's Daily Mirror newspaper.

Mr. Rees-Jones was seriously injured in the crash last year and up to now had been unable to remember much of the circumstances leading up to the accident.

Monday, the Mirror newspaper published an interview with Mr. Rees-Jones in which he says he recalls some details of the crash.

Mr. Rees-Jones has already given three interviews to the French investigating magistrate Hervé Stephan.

Mr. Rees-Jones, who was

Dodi Fayed's bodyguard, survived the crash in the Alma underpass in central Paris because he was wearing a seat belt, but suffered serious head and facial injuries and lost his memory.

In the Mirror interview, he said the Mercedes in which Diana, Dodi and their driver Henri Paul died was being followed by two other cars and a motorcycle shortly before the crash.

"I can recall that we were being followed as we headed for the apartment of Dodi in Paris. There were two cars and a motorbike — one seemed to be a white car with a boot which opened at the back and two doors," he said.

The former bodyguard told the paper that he still did not remember what happened afterwards, at the moment of impact in the Alma underpass.

French police are still looking for a mystery Fiat Uno which might have been implicated in the crash. Traces of paint from a vehicle of this

type were found on the wreck of the Mercedes.

"The police have shown me pictures of a Fiat Uno but I can't help much with that kind of detail. Perhaps more will come back to me, but at the moment that is all I know."

Lawyers acting for Dodi's father, Egyptian millionaire Mohammed Fayed, owner of Harrods store in London and the Ritz Hotel in Paris from where the car set out on the fateful night, have suggested that the car belonged to a photographer chasing the princess.

But this has been rejected by French investigators.

In the interview, Mr. Rees-Jones recalled that Diana had pronounced the name of Dodi just after the collision.

"I have had flashes of a female voice calling out in the back of the car. First it's a groan. Then Dodi's name is called. I don't remember if it is over and over again. But I do remember a voice calling out Dodi's name and that can only be Princess Diana's voice"

Danish secret police accused of spying on political party

COPENHAGEN (AFP) — An agent of Denmark's secret police told Danish television that it infiltrated and spied on a legal political party, the Socialist Workers' Party, between 1980-81.

In a programme on the secret services, broadcast late Sunday on the TV2 channel, agent Anders Noergaard explained how he joined the far-left SAP with the sole aim of gathering information on its activities and overseas contacts.

Such an operation would have been in breach of Danish law, under which the secret police need ministerial approval for surveillance of legal parties.

Then-minister of justice, Ole Espersen of the Social Democrats, said in the programme that he had no knowledge of the operation by the secret service, known as the PET.

The revelations have caused a stir in political circles ahead of Denmark's March 11 general elections. Justice Minister Frank Jensen called on PET chief Birgitte Stamp to give a

detailed report on the matter.

In the mass-circulation daily B.T., Mr. Jensen attempted to put the matter in context, however, saying: "We should remember that this occurred during the cold war, when the far-left flirted with terrorist movements."

Søren Søndergaard, an MP with the ex-Communist Unity party, was one of the SAP figures targeted by the PET.

In comments to the Danish press, he said it was "unspeakably dirty work to spy on a legal political party" and that he was "appalled by the news."

"This spying operation could have had serious consequences on some of the party's overseas contacts," he said. "At that time, the SAP had relations with opponents of the regimes in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Iran and Latin American countries."

"For those people, it could have been a matter of life and death if their names had fallen into the wrong hands."

China lashes out again at U.S. over human rights report

BEIJING (AFP) — A recent report by the U.S. State Department on human rights in China wrongfully attacks the country and is biased, said China's official television news Monday, quoting a Chinese research report.

An article published by Beijing's Research Institute on Human Rights in China said the State Department's Jan. 30 annual report on human rights contained false accusations, CCTV reported.

"First, the institute found throughout the report sentences that were false and which did not correspond to the reality of China," the research institute was quoted as saying.

"The author of this report viewed the situation of human rights in China with

its habitual political prejudices against China."

"The annual U.S. report is a means for the U.S. to practise its politics of force."

Monday's report follows a wave of official editorials condemning the U.S. rights report in early February.

Pressure has mounted in the United States to condemn China's human rights record, with Republicans and Democrats in the U.S. Congress stepping up pressure on the Clinton administration for such a move.

A congressional measure calling for Washington to secure passage of a resolution criticising China at the upcoming U.N. Human Rights Commission was adopted by a House of Representatives committee recently.

Pilot of China Airlines plane aborted landing before fatal crash

TAIPEI (AFP) — The pilot of ill-fated China Airlines Flight 676 was forced to abort an attempted landing just before the plane crashed killing all 196 people on board and six on the ground, a local newspaper reported Monday.

The plane, on a flight from the Indonesian resort island of Bali to Taipei, ploughed into a row of houses near the airport last month, in Taiwan's worst ever air disaster.

Public prosecutors today forbade Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) officials from revealing details of investigations into the disaster until reports are completed.

But the United Evening News quoted CAA sources as saying preliminary findings show the pilot was 1,000 feet higher than he should have been on the approach six miles from Taipei airport.

The pilot shouted, "My goodness," when the plane was two miles from the airport, CAA officials said, allegedly quoting findings from the aircraft's cockpit voice recorder.

But the paper said the pilot

waited until he was within half a mile of the airport before aborting the landing.

"The subsequent abrupt surge to an altitude of 2,700 feet made the plane stall, and despite a second attempt to raise the altitude, the A-300's tail hit the ground outside the airport."

Australian aviation authorities, acting on behalf of the CAA, have completed decoding the aircraft's "black boxes" — voice recorder and flight data recorder.

But, the CAA dropped plans to unveil an animated film simulating flight procedures for the last 300 seconds of flight due to pressure from prosecutors.

Deputy CAA Director Chang Kuo-Cheng apologised at Monday's press conference for the abrupt change of schedule, "from now on we are strictly banned to release any relevant data or speak (on the crash). Otherwise, we may be put in jail."

Despite the lack of official reports, an increasing number of local newspapers are speculating that human error might be to blame for the mystery crash.

Blair faces tough choices after U.K. countryside protest

LONDON (AFP) — British Prime Minister Tony Blair was facing hard choices this week about how to handle rural affairs after more than 250,000 people from the countryside turned the tables of the Labour government and exercised their "right to roam" through the centre of London.

It could lead to a revamp of ministries in Whitehall and a temporary end of the anti-hunting bill.

In one of the biggest protest demonstrations since the British capital since the anti-nuclear rallies of the 1980s, rural folk proved they have the political clout to force the government to take their views seriously.

Environment Minister Michael Meacher, the only government minister on the march, was impressed.

He called it a "celebration of the countryside" and his comments were said to have the full backing of Downing Street, anxious to pacify rural rumblings.

His remarks were in contrast to comments a few hours before the march by Agriculture Minister Jack Cunningham — known as "jackboots" by his enemies — who said the protest had been hijacked by vested interests, notably the hunting and shooting lobby.

Mr. Meacher hinted in a television interview that an anti-hunting bill in parliament, which was seen as the catalyst for Sunday's rural uprising, was unlikely to become law.

Mike Foster, author of the bill, acknowledged its future was doubtful. "Clearly it is at a difficult stage because time is quite finite," he said.

There were also increasing hints Monday that the government might revamp the agriculture and environment departments to create a rural affairs ministry, although Mr. Cunningham said the final decision was Mr. Blair's.

In an earlier gesture to the rural lobby the government promised that no vil-

lage schools would be closed without ministerial approval.

Among Sunday's marchers was Conservative leader William Hague. He dismissed allegations that the protest had been politically hijacked by the Tories. "Anyone who thought this was about toffs in red coats will have been put right today," he said.

Labour was to blame for "setting off this anger in the countryside," he added.

But Mr. Cunningham, although admitting the march was "impressive" maintained that most of the anger stemmed from policies of the previous Conservative government. Although the march had been originally inspired by hunt supporters, it rapidly expanded to encapsulate rural anger against the way the Labour government was perceived to be treating the countryside.

Marchers objected to what they termed a "bossy administration" and a "nanny state" which produced the much-reviled ban on beef on the bone and plans to allow more building in country areas.

Banners carried by the marchers said everything: "Eat British lamb — 50,000 foxes can't be wrong." "Say no to the urban jackboot." "Don't take the backbone out of farming." and "The only Foster that makes sense comes in a can."

Paul Latham, for the Countryside Alliance which organised the march, said: "It shows that the rural lobby is alive and a force in politics."

"In the build-up to the march, there have been a number of decisions taken that the countryside would welcome. I'm sure we will see more such decisions," he said.

Organisers said the show of strength had contributed to recent government gestures over green field developments, the right to roam and through extra support to farmers over the "mad cow" crisis.

The alliance claimed there were 284,500 marchers on the route.

White House aide cites executive privilege

NEW YORK (R) — Sidney Blumenthal, a senior White House press adviser, declined last week to answer several questions before the grand jury investigating the relationship between President Bill Clinton and former intern Monica Lewinsky, the New York Times reported Monday.

In an interview, Mr. Blumenthal told the newspaper he cited executive privilege.

Mr. Blumenthal, therefore, became the second senior White House official to assert that his discussions with the president are covered by executive privilege, the Times said.

Deputy White House Counsel Bruce Lindsey also challenged prosecutors in an appearance 10 days ago, the newspaper reported.

Mr. Blumenthal told the Times that prosecutors from independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's office asked him before the grand jury last Thursday about advice he had given Mr. Clinton and Hillary Rodham Clinton on how to respond to accusations related to Ms. Lewinsky.

Mr. Blumenthal said prosecutors also asked him whether he had had any discussions about independent prosecutor Kenneth Starr or his staff with the president and the first lady, the Times said.

Judge Norma Holloway Johnson of the U.S. District Court in Washington has told Mr. Clinton's lawyers and Mr. Starr to prepare to argue the issue of executive privilege in her court, the Times said. Judge Johnson is supervising the Lewinsky case.

"The White House has not officially acknowledged that it is prepared to assert executive privilege because of its potent historical overtones and because it belies the president's claim that he is cooperating fully with Starr's inquiry," the Times reported.

However, "Mr. Clinton has retained a legal specialist in privilege claims, Neil Eggleston, a former associate in the White House counsel's office, to prepare briefs invoking privilege on the president's behalf," the newspaper said.

Brazil indigenous rights activist Villas Boas dies at 82

SAO PAULO (R) — Claudio Villas Boas, Brazil's famed anthropologist and indigenous rights activist died Sunday, aged 82, the government's Indian Foundation (FUNAI) said.

Known by his colleagues as the spirit leader of Brazil's indigenous tribes, Villas Boas dedicated more than 30 years of his life working in the Amazon jungles to preserve the cultures of Brazil's native Indians, a FUNAI official said.

Together with his brother Orlando, Villas Boas was the founder of FUNAI and the Xingu indigenous reservation of 16 tribes in the southern Amazon state of Mato Grosso.

Contracted by the government in his youth as an official expediter, Villas Boas was responsible for Brazil's penetra-

tion into the unexplored hinterlands of Mato Grosso state. He and his brother located some 21 Indian settlements in the remote interior of Brazil in the 1960's in an expedition called "Marcha para o oeste" (Westwards march).

In recent years, Villas Boas' experiences led human rights movements to protect dozens of Indian groups in Brazil that faced extinction as farming, logging and mining interests swallowed up their traditional homelands.

كلنا معكم

Youth goes on trial for genocide in Rwanda

KIBUYE, Rwanda (AFP) — A Rwandan court in the western town of Kibuye Monday began trying a teenager accused of genocide during the mass ethnic bloodletting of 1994 in which at least 500,000 people died.

A human rights movement named the youthful defendant as Aloys Ntenganya, who went on trial with six other suspects, including his elder brother, facing the same charges of genocide and complicity in genocide.

According to the human rights umbrella association CLADHO, Ntenganya, from the Gitesi district of the Kibuye region, was 15 years old at the time of the slaughter of Tutsi and moderate Hutus by Hutu soldiers and extremist militia forces almost four years ago.

Ntenganya, the fifth minor to go before a court in connection with the genocide, has twice seen his trial postponed since he was jailed in May 1996, the first time for lack of a magistrate and the second because he had no defence lawyer.

He is among some 4,000 juvenile suspects who were detained after the genocide and been held in overcrowded jails along with many thousands of other prisoners and potential defendants.

Between half a million and 800,000 people were slaughtered after Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana was killed when his plane was shot down close to Kigali early in April 1994.

In July that year, the mainly Tutsi rebels of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) seized Kigali and established a new government, consisting predominantly of Tutsis.

A member of CLADHO in Kibuye, told AFP that of the four other juveniles who have already been tried, "one pleaded guilty and got two years in jail — the time he was held before the trial."

"Aloys Ntenganya has not admitted anything," said the member of the human rights collective, adding that one youth had confessed to the murder of two children but was still awaiting sentencing, and another received 3-1/2 years in jail, the same term as three adults with whom he was tried.

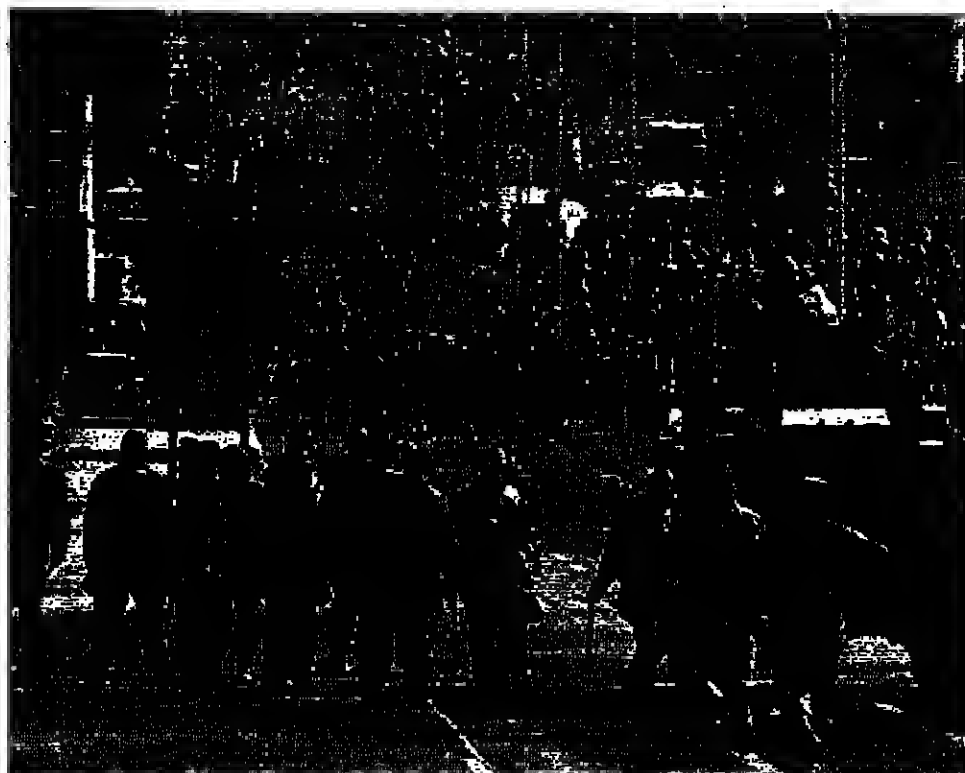
CLADHO, which helps defend teenage suspects as part of a programme sponsored by the U.N. Children's Fund, (UNICEF), had Ntenganya's trial postponed for the second time on Jan. 29 because the youth had no lawyer.

"Of the four trials that have already taken place, only one of the accused minors had a defence lawyer," the rights activist added.

The non-governmental organisation Avocats sans Frontières (ASF — Lawyers without Borders) sought to take Ntenganya's case in hand, but finally gave up last week, citing "security reasons."

"This time, Aloys should have a lawyer, but we're still not sure," the CLADHO member said. Otherwise, the teenager would have to defend himself, with observers present from CLADHO and the charity Human Rights Watch.

Hutu extremist Interahamwe militia forces have been active for some weeks in the Kibuye region.



Riot police, supported by an Armoured Personnel Carrier, block the way for ethnic Albanian demonstrators in the centre of Pristina, capital of troubled Serbia's southern province of Kosovo (Reuters photo)

Yeltsin replaces sacked ministers, reshuffles Chechenya troubleshooter

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin Monday replaced three ousted ministers, appointing Chechenya troubleshooter Ivan Ryhkin to handle tricky ties with former Soviet states and promoting two junior ministers to head up their departments.

Mr. Ryhkin, who has led negotiations with Chechenya since his appointment as security council secretary in October 1996, was named deputy prime minister responsible for relations with members of the Commonwealth of Independent States. He replaced Valery Serov, who was sacked Saturday.

Mr. Yeltsin also promoted Yuri Mikhailov to transport

minister to replace the ousted Nikolai Tsakh, while Alexander Tikhonov was named education minister, replacing Vladimir Kineliov.

In a separate move aimed at cutting back on the privileges of senior officials, Mr. Yeltsin removed the personal bodyguards of First Deputy Prime Ministers Anatoly Chubais and Boris Nemtsov, all deputy premiers and presidential administration chief Yuri Yarov.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and head of the Kremlin administration Valentin Yumashev will retain their personal protection, Kremlin spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembsky said.

Mr. Yeltsin played down Saturday's dismissals of the

three ministers, saying they did not represent a cabinet reshuffle.

"What reshuffle?" the Kremlin chief said ahead of a meeting with Mr. Chernomyrdin. "Ministers come, ministers go," he added, according to ITAR-TASS news agency.

Mr. Serov's departure had been widely predicted in the Russia media, which blamed him for briefing Mr. Yeltsin badly at a CIS summit last October at which Russia was criticised by member states over its failure to implement decisions from previous summits.

Saturday's dismissals have been interpreted as a victory for reformist elements within the government who survived the mini-purge unscathed.

Parliament mayhem stops vote on S. Korean prime minister

SEOUL (AFP) — Mayhem erupted in South Korea's parliament Monday, halting a showdown vote on the approval of a new prime minister nominated by President Kim Dae-Jung.

The vote stopped shortly after it started, when members of the opposition Grand National Party (GNP) cast blank votes to block the appointment of the president's political ally, Kim Jong-Pil, as prime minister.

Ruling party members immediately swarmed around screened voting booths and sat on the wooden ballot boxes, shoving away GNP members and ignoring appeals for order by speaker Kim Soo-Han.

"This is illegal," yelled one member of the president's ruling National Congress for New Politics (NCNP), as others grabbed GNP members around the neck and dragged them away from the ballot boxes.

The opposition party, which has a majority 161 seats in the 294-member National Assembly, claimed its members followed proper voting regulations. But the ruling party, which needs at least 148 votes, demanded a new vote.

Following bitter scuffles for about two hours, most ruling

and opposition members retreated to their offices in the National Assembly building. The session is open until midnight Monday.

The presidential office indicated Kim Dae-Jung would go ahead with an acting prime minister to end his administrative vacuum which has delayed important matters such as an amnesty for political prisoners.

U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Charles Kartman arrived in Seoul Monday for discussions with South Korean officials ahead of four-party Korean peace talks later this month.

But the impasse in parliament disrupted Mr. Kartman's schedule.

"He comes at a bad time since the new president has yet to announce the cabinet. But this was unexpected and the two countries need to talk before the second round," a government official told AFP.

Presidential spokesman Park Ji-Won said that regardless of the vote, the president would announce the list of cabinet members "by tomorrow morning."

"There must be an end to the political vacuum, which is driving our country into a life or death situation," Mr. Park said.

The president last week

declared a law on the new government structure, cutting down the number of ministers to pave the way for the formation of a new cabinet.

The ruling party urged a political truce to help the president handle a slew of unsolved state affairs. "There must be no more political war, which has delayed the formation of a new cabinet," said NCNP member Chung Hee-Kyong.

But the opposition party refused to back down, vowing to veto Kim Jong-Pil, 72, the founder of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, who won a pre-election pledge from the president to appoint half of some 20 ministerial posts.

"Kim Jong-Pil is not competent to help South Korea overcome its crisis. We need an economic expert as prime minister," GNP lawmaker Kim Jae-Chun said in a pre-vote speech.

There are fears the political feud could intensify the country's financial crisis, which has shown signs of easing last month.

Analysts said the opposition veto stemmed from concern that the president might change the constitution to shift from the current presidential system to a parliamentary cabinet system.

Police disperse mass protest by ethnic Albanians in Kosovo

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AFP) — Serbian police used batons, teargas and water cannon Monday to disperse thousands of ethnic Albanian demonstrators in an anti-Belgrade protest in Pristina, capital of Serbia's southern Kosovo province.

After a first police charge on the demonstrators, an AFP reporter was severely beaten by a group of policemen who used their batons and rifle butts.

Police warned demonstrators to disperse, but immediately after rushed at them in an operation supported by armoured vehicles.

A police helicopter was flying above the protesters while, according to witnesses, police also used tear gas as the demonstrators hit back with sticks and stones.

Most of the demonstrators dispersed around 11:00 a.m. (1000 GMT).

The demonstration under the slogan "Stop terror, violence and ethnic cleansing" against Serbian rule and police brutality came after a

weekend of violence that saw 20 people killed in clashes between Serb police and members of Kosovo's ethnic-Albanian majority.

Albanian political parties organised the protest to condemn Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, whom they accuse of "terror, violence and ethnic cleansing."

Several hundred riot police were deployed along the march route of the protesters, who carried placards expressing solidarity with the people of Drenica, in central Kosovo, where 16 Albanians were killed Saturday in violence that also claimed the lives of four Serbian police officers.

The Serbian interior ministry blamed the killings on ethnic Albanian "terrorists" — a term it uses for the separatist paramilitary Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK).

Meanwhile, Serb officials said armed Albanian militants had attacked a police station overnight Sunday in Podujevo, north of Pristina, while others had launched

grenade attacks against Serb homes in the southern region of Djakovica.

The new wave of violence comes ahead of elections due on March 22 in Kosovo but which Belgrade is refusing to recognise.

Kosovo Albanians have refused since 1989 to take part in Serbian elections and have instead run their own polls, forming a shadow government in the region. The authorities in Belgrade in 1989 withdrew the autonomy that Kosovo had enjoyed.

The ethnic Albanian community forms about 90 per cent of the population of the province, which accounts for about 20 per cent of the entire population in Serbia.

The international community had been fearing an outbreak of political violence in Kosovo where resentment has been building up for years.

Ibrahim Rugova, the leader of the Albanian community in Kosovo, had repeatedly urged the United States and the European

Union to put pressure on Belgrade to rein in the Serbian police.

But Yugoslav President Milosevic, who was formerly president of Serbia, Sunday firmly rejected any international involvement in the Kosovo problem.

Mr. Milosevic sent a message to Serbian President Milan Milutinovic saying he was categorically opposed to an "internationalisation" of the situation which "could not be successfully resolved" in such a manner.

The U.S. envoy to the former Yugoslavia, Robert Gelbard, visited the region last week and said the Serbian authorities were mainly responsible for the violence, but also condemned UCK "terrorism."

He dismissed the idea of full independence for Kosovo as "unrealistic." European Union countries have been less strident than the United States but have angered Yugoslav authorities by calling for a "special status" for the province.

Japanese Aum sect doctor escapes gallows for subway gassing

TOKYO (AFP) — The Japanese doctor who spread deadly sarin gas in Tokyo's subway effectively escaped the bangman Monday when prosecutors demanded instead that he face life in prison.

Once one of Japan's most promising heart surgeons, 51-year-old Ikou Hayashi has admitted being one of the Aum Supreme Truth sect members who released the Nazi nerve agent in Tokyo's subway in March 1995, killing 12 people.

But prosecutors at Tokyo District Court said he deserved some leniency because of his admission of six charges against him, including murder, and the evidence he gave against other cult members.

"It was a heinous and mean crime, which threw the metropolitan area into utter confusion," a prosecutor said. "It was unparalleled in the criminal history of our country and caused a great shock to countries of the world."

Hayashi "lacked the professional ethics required for doctors who save people's lives and he should be censured more than anyone else," the prosecutor said.

But the former sect member "has consistently acknowledged the charges and shown clear signs of repentance," he added.

Hayashi had given detailed testimony about the sect's crimes and his statements to investigators and court hearings "dealt a blow to the sect and helped prevent heinous crimes."

"Weighing the sentiment of victims and other factors, we cannot help but hesitate to demand capital punishment," the prosecutor said, calling instead for life imprisonment.

Hayashi was the first of the key members of the Aum sect, led by guru Shoko Asahara, to face a sentence hearing for the subway attack.

Wearing a grey suit and white shirt, Hayashi spoke haltingly and in a hoarse voice when asked whether he had read a book, "Underground," detailing witnesses accounts of the 1995 gassing, which also injured thousands.

"I read it through three times. I have taken it upon myself to read it because I am one of the people responsible," the former doctor said, removing his silver-framed glasses to wipe away tears with a handkerchief.

Hayashi left the cult shortly after his arrest one month after the subway attack. He has admitted all six counts including the subway attack, and the



Ikou Hayashi

widow of another victim said after the hearing: "All my happiness was taken away and my life was changed completely. I can never forgive him. I think he deserves the death sentence for what he did."

At a hearing in June last year, Hayashi, who was the sect's so-called treatment minister, said that he was ordered by the cult's guru to take part in the subway attack.

He said he pricked a plastic bag containing the Nazi-invented liquid sarin, exposing it to the air where it quickly formed a deadly gas spreading through the crowded train.

"I wished the passengers would get off before it happened," he tearfully recalled. "I was worried about a woman who was standing in front of me. I knew she would be dead for sure. I wished she would get off before it happened."

Four other sect members allegedly exposed bags of sarin at the same time in different Tokyo subway trains.

Hayashi, a graduate from the prestigious Keio University medical school, joined the sect in 1990 with his 48-year-old wife Rira and two children. His wife has received a suspended sentence and his children have left the sect.

The former doctor was unique in the doomsday cult in being a middle-aged professional who moved in high society. His wife is a relative of the Japanese designer Jun Ashida.

Most of the sect's followers were young students. Hayashi's medical licence has been revoked at his own request.

The defence is due to give closing arguments on March 30 and a final sentence is expected before mid-year.

Michelin gourmet guide hands out top stars

PARIS (AFP) — The French gourmet's bible, the red Michelin Guide, has handed out three new three-star awards to the nation's top restaurants in its 1998 edition published Monday.

France now boasts 21 three-star establishments, while the guide also gives its top honour to 18 restaurants in other countries in Europe.

They include four in Britain, three each in Belgium, Germany, Italy and Spain, and two in Switzerland.

One of the main heroes of the latest edition is Alain Ducasse, 41, who won back the coveted three stars after his Monte Carlo restaurant, "Le Louis XV," was downgraded to two last year. He also held onto the three

stars for the Paris restaurant that bears his name.

"It is only justice," said Mr. Ducasse who complained bitterly last year when he lost a star at Monte Carlo. Now, however, he is the only chef in France to boast a total of six stars.

Pierre Gagnaire, 47, who handed in his honour after his luxury restaurant at Saint-Etienne in central France went bankrupt in 1995, has fought his way back.

He opened another restaurant in Paris 14 months after the Saint-Etienne eatery closed, and it has now won him three stars.

It costs some 700 francs (about \$116) to eat "à la carte" at his restaurant in the Champs Elysees area, while his business lunches run from between 450

and 780 francs.

Twins Jacques and Laurent Poulenc, 33, won three stars for their "Jardin des Sens" restaurant at Montpellier, southern France, which was praised for its "creative, Mediterranean-style cuisine."

The twins also scored 18 out of 20 in this year's Gault Millau guide. They promised to keep their prices "reasonable." They currently offer a fixed menu lunch on weekdays for 210 francs.

Although the guide handed out three new three-star honours in France, its inspectors have become increasingly sparing over the years.

The total number of stars fell from 515 in 1997 to 496 in 1998, including 21 three-star

restaurants — six of them in the capital Paris — 70 two-stars and 405 one-stars.

Two stars are no mean honour either, rewarding "an excellent table, worth going out of one's way to visit, choice specialties and wines."

Four new restaurants entered that category Monday. They were "L'Arnsbourg" at Baerenthal in eastern France, "Meurin" at Bethune in the north and "Opera" and "Jamin," both in Paris.

In 1997 the guide started up its "Bib gourmand" award for restaurants that maintain local gastronomic traditions. Their numbers have increased markedly from 410 in 1997 to 458 in 1998.

The Jordanian Korean Friendship Association

extends its sincere congratulations to

His Excellency

The President of

The Republic of Korea

Mr. Kim Dae Jung

wishing him and the people of Korea success and prosperity

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Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 5684311, 5699634, 5667171, 5603585
Facsimile: 5696183
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Beyond offer on 425

ISRAEL'S OFFER to implement in full U.N. Security Council Resolution 425 as basis for withdrawing from South Lebanon sounds innocent enough. On closer look, however, it appears to aim for a strategic negotiating objective whose purpose is clearly to separate the Lebanese from the Syrian negotiating process.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has endorsed the recent "offer," after it was floated by his Minister of Defence Yitzhak Mordechai.

In principle, Beirut would be hard-pressed to refuse an Israeli preparedness that presupposes the full implementation of Resolution 425 without prior "conditions." But while the new Israeli position does not call for a peace treaty or normalisation with Lebanon, it is predicated on the "Lebanon first" formula which did not work in the past nor is likely to any time soon. Israel's record in enforcing past U.N. resolutions is dismal and for it now to accept the implementation of SCR 425 sounds fishy at best.

With this in mind, Lebanon has every right to assume that Israel aims to attain an objective that goes beyond the safety of its northern border. There is every reason to believe that the Netanyahu government's ultimate aim is to delink the Lebanese from the Syrian track as a way to reduce Syria's bargaining strength in any future peace talks.

It is no secret that Damascus is using the Lebanese card in its quest to get the Golan Heights back. Which makes it incumbent on the Jewish state, if it wants comprehensive and lasting peace with all its Arab neighbours, to offer acceptance of all U.N. resolutions notably 242 and 338, and not just 425.

Lebanon's "solidarity" with Syria under the circumstances is only understandable. Consequently, if Israel is serious about establishing peace along its northern border with Lebanon, it must talk serious peace with Syria.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Dustour's Yasser Zaareh hailed a television programme organised by the Al Shariqah of the United Arab Emirates three days ago to raise funds for Arah Jerusalem saying that the programme was a greater achievement than Arab politics. The television programme organised upon the request of the Al Shariqah emirate ruler Sheikh Sultan Al Qasbi, collected \$20 million which will benefit projects designed to help the Arah citizens of Jerusalem to cling to their territory and their holy places, said the writer. The success of this satellite television programme which collected contributions from Arabs around the globe especially from the Arah Gulf states, was a very strong response to the American massing of forces in the Gulf and Washington's unlimited support to the Jewish state which continues to occupy the holy city and Palestinian lands, said the writer. Through a single television programme, Zaareh said, the Al Shariqah emirate did for Jerusalem more than the Arab politicians could ever do, and the contributions which are badly needed by the Palestinian people will no doubt boost their morale and give them hope and support in their ongoing struggle for freedom.

Al Ra'i's Mahmoud Rimawi said that by resorting to the U.N. and international legitimacy Iraq has been able to reach an agreement for defusing tension over the weapons inspection issue. Likewise Lihiya which resorted to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has won a verdict ruling that only this court has the jurisdiction to decide whether two Libyans suspected of involvement in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am passenger plane should stand trial, according to Rimawi. The writer said it is not shameful for the oppressed to seek justice among circles which enjoy the world's respect and there is no harm in seeking support from world organisations which can help restore right and justice. He said for Lihiya it is unreasonable and illogical to see the country exposed to continued sanctions upon the desire of Washington or London as long as the ICJ has not found any of its citizens guilty of crimes attributed to them and therefore the sanctions must be lifted. As for Iraq, the writer said that as long as it carries out the U.N. resolutions there is no justification for perpetuating the sanctions which are considered a crime against humanity.

The View from Fourth Circle

Deir Yassin's enduring political, moral architecture

By Rami G. Khouri

DEIR YASSIN (Jerusalem) — As Israel this year commemorates its 50th anniversary, the site of the Palestinian village of Deir Yassin is emerging as a counter-symbol of Israel's destructive impact on the Palestinians and the wider Arab World. I have just spent a few days visiting some of the most powerful symbols of the common Arah perception of what Israel has meant to us — the remains of Arah villages along the western outskirts of Jerusalem that were attacked by Israeli troops in the 1947-48 war, and in some cases were subjected to cold-blooded massacres by Jewish troops.

Deir Yassin (the area is Giv'at Sha'ul to Israelis) is the most powerful of those harsh symbols — between 100 and 250 Palestinian Arabs were massacred there by Jewish troops on April 9, 1948 — but not the only one. Somewhere between 400 and 600 Palestinian Arab settlements, neighbourhoods and villages disappeared after the 1948 war, either permanently abandoned or taken over by Jewish Israelis. A concerted Palestinian, Arab and increasingly international effort is under way this year to remind the world — and particularly Israelis — of the historical facts and contemporary meaning of those phantom Palestinian villages: the atrocities that Jews committed against Arabs in 1947-48; these emptied villages' symbolism of the wider calamity of the Palestinians' physical displacement and diaspora; the official and widespread popular Israeli refusal to come to grips with this reality; and the Palestinian demand that this deep wound be acknowledged, and then healed, in order for genuine Arab-Israeli peace to be achieved.

An international conference in Jerusalem on April 9 will spur on this drive, already under way for several years in the form of a movement called Deir Yassin Remembered that aims to build a memorial at Deir Yassin, with the participation of Arabs, Israelis, Americans, and others.

As I visited some of these former Palestinian villages around Jerusalem — Deir Yassin, Lifta and Malhiha, in particular — I also visited parts of Israeli West Jerusalem, on my own, with Palestinians, or with Israelis. I returned home convinced that within the ugly hidden secrets of these destroyed Palestinian communities there also lurks an opportunity to generate new political, historical and emotional meeting points for Arabs and Israelis who seriously seek a fair negotiated peace that has any chance of enduring.

The most striking thing to me about Deir Yassin, Lifta and Malhiha is not that they disappeared, but rather that they have endured — and not that they have endured only

in people's memories and political attitudes, but that they have endured in that spellbinding medium that is so central to both Jewish-Zionist and Arah psyches: the anchorage in ancestral soil of structures built of stone quarried from the earth, and constructed by the hands of men and women whose lives are defined primarily by their physical and moral attachment to that particular piece of land. The stones, the earth, the homes, the people, the communities, and the collective memories all merge into a single force that is equally compelling for Israelis and Arabs — and it is most dramatic at places like Deir Yassin, Lifta and Malhiha where the older Palestinian stone homes are re-used within communities comprising newer Israeli stone structures.

Whether largely abandoned and hemmed in by highways (like Lifta), surrounded by new Israeli residential neighbourhoods (like Malhiha), or expanded and used as a mental health institution within a busy commercial area (like Deir Yassin), these Arah villages are conspicuous not because they died — but because they refuse to die. Their stone-built Palestinian Arab homes, mosques, communal buildings and other structures endure in great dignity amidst the hulk expansion of modern Israeli urbanism. Their very names live on. The Israeli attempt to deny or forever obliterate the Palestinian identity of these villages, ironically, has only accentuated that Arab identity — in both physical and political terms. You don't have to look very hard to see the original and enduring villages of Deir Yassin, Lifta and Malhiha — for they stand out from their surroundings, silent yet eloquent stone sentinels to the same human and communal ethos that Israeli Jews have manifested and now celebrate after a half century of statehood: the right to live in freedom in one's own homeland, and the determination to struggle for that right, for decades, centuries, or even millennia.

This accentuation of the meaning of Deir Yassin and its many sister villages has three distinct dimensions that must be appreciated if Arabs and Israelis are ever to live in genuine peace and good neighbourliness: a) the stone buildings endure not because of the chemical characteristics of the building materials, but because of the cultural and human characteristics of the builders, the Palestinian families that have always loved this land enough to quarry its stones in order to erect shelters for their families, and shrines for their gods; b) the Arab, increasingly international, and even occasionally Israeli demand that Israel officially acknowledge Jewish-Israeli responsibility for what happened at Deir Yassin emphasises the tremendous importance that Palestinians attach

to a truthful recounting of their historical narrative; and, c) Deir Yassin and the hundreds of other former Palestinian villages are not only road-markers of a painful past, but also milestones along a road that Arabs and Israelis can travel together, towards a better future defined by equality, tolerance and justice — and above all by truth.

Some Israelis have started to address this awkward, unspoken dimension of their recent past — the Jewish use of massacres, terror, and ethnic cleansing against Palestinian Arab villagers in 1947-48. It is not likely or possible that the past be forgotten or even worse, ignored and denied. The reasonable demand that Arabs and the world respond to Israeli security and sovereignty concerns in the current peace process will always remain unfulfilled if Jews, Israelis and the world do not acknowledge the mirror-image Palestinian sense of historical injustice and contemporary vulnerability. If Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu thinks reciprocity is a critical foundation of current peace-making, here is a good place for him to start putting his morality where his mouth is.

Deir Yassin, Lifta, Malhiha and hundreds of other such sites remind us how painful the recent past has been for many people in this region — and that it will remain painful and violent for all if all the land's historical truths are not adequately documented, acknowledged, and shared. The enduring stone buildings of these Palestinian villages are monuments to collective shame and pain; but they can also become a unique Arab-Israeli medium of shared understanding and mutual acknowledgement — an indigenous, distinctly Abrahamic architecture of forgiveness, apology, mercy, and tolerant co-existence.

Is this perhaps a logical moral lesson of the prophetic Abrahamic tradition that has always been defined by the quarrying of stones in Palestine and the construction of temples of faith to our shared God? Or do some Abrahamic people have less rights than others, their history less relevance, and their stone buildings less meaning? Why, then, do these buildings refuse to disappear, and in fact speak to us more loudly than ever before? Is it possible that the architecture of Deir Yassin is a moral challenge to all the children of Abraham, rather than only a problematic memory for some?

Go visit this spellbinding and troubling place when you are next in Jerusalem, and ask our one God to remind us once more how violence can be transformed into peace, evil into good, and individual fear into mutual security.

Brief insight into the British judiciary: Possible implications for Jordan?

By Lu'ayy Minwer Al-Rimawi

IN ORDER to enrich public debate on the issue of reforming the Jordanian judiciary, let's look briefly into the British judiciary and the wide immunity judges in Britain enjoy today. It must be emphasised, however, that the complexity of modern legal systems all around the world has rendered conflict between the judiciary and the executive inevitable. Even in Britain, the relationship between the judiciary and the Home Office, especially during the last months of the outgoing Tory administration, proved to be highly controversial. With respect to Jordan, a more sober assessment of the current crises that have afflicted our system is required. Moreover, the recent entanglement between the judiciary and government should not be dramatised and allowed to obfuscate Jordan's traditionally impressive judicial record.

Guarantees for the independence of the British judiciary: As a protection from political manipulation, the 1701 Act of Settlement prescribes that an incumbent senior British judge cannot be removed from his/her position. (However, certain provisions in the 1876 Appellate Jurisdiction Act and the 1981 Supreme Courts Act authorise, in extreme circumstances, that a petition may be made to the Queen by both Houses of Parliament to remove a judge. Moreover, the 1973 Administration of Justice Act allows the Lord Chancellor, after consulting with senior judges, to declare vacant an office of any judge who is incapable of carrying on with his/her job. The Lord Chancellor can also dismiss junior judges for incapacity or misbehaviour.) According to the 1993 Judicial Pension and Retirement Act, all judges should retire when they reach 70. Judges are also immune from being sued for judgments rendered during their tenure (as was confirmed in *Sirros v. Moore*, 1975). However, British judges used to be allowed to carry on with their judicial jobs until they reached 75 years old.

Outline of British judiciary system and courts structure

The head of the British judiciary is the Lord Chancellor, who, paradoxically, is appointed on political grounds. He is appointed and dismissed by the British prime minister, and holds the office with the government of the day. He, upon invitation, either nominates or appoints all lower ranks in the judiciary. (However, he is guided by the 1990 Courts and Legal Services Act which defines the relevant qualifications for the various judicial posts.) His other most important functions include: a speaker of the House of Lords when discussing legislative matters, a member of the cabinet and head of the judges in the House of Lords. He also has important

administrative functions by virtue of the 1971 Courts Act. Other senior posts in the British judiciary include: the Lord Chief Justice (President of the Criminal Division of the Court of Appeal); the Master of the Rolls (President of the Civil Division of the Court of Appeal); the President of the Family Division of the High Court and the Vice-Chancellor of the Chancery Division of the High Court. There are of course the junior judges which include circuit judges who sit in both the Crown Court and County Court, district judges, stipendiary magistrates, etc.

For their parts, judges in the Law Lords hear civil and criminal appeals where a point of law is involved, though it is generally accepted that they largely hear civil cases. Lords Justices of Appeal sit in both divisions of the Court of Appeal hearing criminal and civil cases, and due to their very heavy workload, they now number more than 30 judges. However, the two English courts that hear civil cases are the County Court and the High Court, though small claims can be heard before the Small Claims Court. (See for example the 1990 Courts and Legal Services Act and the 1991 High Court and County Courts Jurisdiction Order.) In its civil capacity, the Court of Appeal, which was set up by the 1873 Judicature Act, hears appeals from all three divisions of the High Court, the County Court, the Immigration Appeal Tribunal, the Employment Appeal Tribunal, etc. However, the High Court is divided into three subdivisions: First, the Queen's Bench Division (it has a special Commercial Court, an Admiralty Court and exercises supervisory functions over inferior courts.) Second, the Chancery Division (it has a special Companies Court and hears cases related to corporate and individual insolvency, enforcement of mortgages, trust property, copyright, intellectual property, contested probate, etc.) Third, the Family Division (it deals with nullity of marriage, non-contested probate and has jurisdiction to hear wardship cases and all cases relating to the 1989 Children Act.) Criminal cases are mostly dealt by the Crown Court (which sits in 90 different centres spread all over the U.K.) and the Magistrates' Courts (which sit in over 700 courts and try cases related to the geographical areas in which they were perpetrated).

Possible implications for Jordan?

Briefly citing the British judicial system was only an introduction to the complexity of the question in mind. For, this highly acclaimed system is still far from perfection and has even occasionally lagged behind the more progressive continental legal systems. Moreover, the British judiciary system has traditionally been described as dominated by upper-class, white-male, Oxbridge-educated judges. (A

widely quoted analysis by Stephen Byer, showed that, out of 26 judges appointed in 1993 and 1994, 21 of the judges had attended either Cambridge or Oxford. Patricia Davies also wrote in *The Independent* on June 27, 1996 that "male appointments to all ranks of the judiciary stand at 2,804 compared with 312 women and just 75 people of non-white origin..." Other criticisms refer to the position of the Lord Chancellor in Parliament, subsequent implications on his ministerial accountability and lack of a British Ministry of Justice.)

The writer should like to emphasise that a sound and unsoiled judicial system, in a post-modernist age, is not only a bulwark inspiring unquenchable national trust. It is an important yardstick by which the integrity of the whole political system may be measured. This is more the case given that Jordan's regional matrix is drenched with authoritarian regimes which have scant respect for the judiciary and its independence. There has been many serious and commendable attempts in Jordan at reforming the judiciary. But so far they have not become a panacea, capable of redressing the mounting pressures on our judicial system. However, it is unrealistic to envisage complete dissociation between the branches of the judiciary and the executive. For, as we have briefly seen in the British context, there is a degree of healthy relationship between the executive and the judiciary. Indeed, in certain circumstances this meaningful relationship is a must. What firmly remains to be determined in Amman is the nuances of such delicate relationship.

The writer calls for more concerted efforts combining the expertise of local professional legal bodies, academics, judiciary members and the executive in order to lift the status of our judicial system to international standards. Though, one must hasten to add that in such a sensitive matter the process of appraisal should be more dispassionate, non-partisan, dwelling on the highest standards found in comparative practice. For, what is at stake is not simply squabbles between various local departments. Rather, it is Jordan's international reputation as a state in the region with a reformed legal system, which answers many modernist legal challenges. And indeed, it is a duty incumbent on every one of us to promote our Jordanian legal system internationally in a manner which would make Jordan the shining pride of a drab Middle East.

The writer is a masters degree graduate of Cambridge University who is conducting research towards a doctorate in financial regulations and teaches public international law at the London School of Economics. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

LETTERS

'Offensive allegations'

To the editor:

I WRITE in reference to the *Agence France Presse* article published in the Jordan Times on Feb. 26-27 and Headlined "U.N.: Weapons inspectors need to be more sensitive." In the article a U.N. official criticised the behaviour of a group of officials and staff of the Chilean Air Force, who are carrying out their duties with UNSCOM in Baghdad.

The United Nations Humanitarian Affairs Coordinator, Mr. Denis Halliday, said the Chilean aircrew, participating with the U.N. weapons inspectors, "are fond of a drink or two, carry their radios like six-shooters... behave loudly in restaurants and generally can be obnoxious."

These declarations by a United Nations official, who has nothing to do with UNSCOM, are offensive and unjustifiable, and were emphatically rejected by the director of the Advisory and Verification Centre of UNSCOM in Baghdad, Mr. Nils Carlstrom, and by the president of the Special Commission Mr. Richard Butler. Mr. Butler, the highest authority in the U.N. Special Commission, Thursday said in New York that the Chilean group had a "magnificent performance" and they are also "diligent and valiant young men, indispensable for the job they were charged with. I appreciate the Chilean government's decision in keeping them at our disposal."

Mr. Halliday's declarations have nothing to do with reality, Mr. Butler emphasised. U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan positively evaluated the Chilean military efforts and formally asked the government to prolong the Chilean Air Force assignment in Baghdad.

I find it difficult to comprehend the negative allegations made of the Chilean team in Iraq, especially as they were made by an employee of a global organisation. I deplore and condemn both Mr. Halliday's attitude and his accusations, which harmed the prestige of my country's military establishment. The Chilean military has served the United Nations efforts with utmost dedication and professionalism and the team in Baghdad is exclusively in charge of piloting the helicopters for the technicians and experts of UNSCOM in Iraq. I thought it important to make this declaration in order to avoid any misunderstandings by the Jordanian people regarding our military staff, especially that all Mr. Halliday's allegations regarding the Chilean military team in Iraq are baseless.

Jorge Iglesias
Ambassador of Chile in Jordan

Prayers for Iraq and U.S.

To the editor:

WHILE I am not inclined to give aid and comfort to the enemy, and we are not yet at war, I must say, and would hope all would hear, that many people in the U.S. also are praying that war does not come. We are on our knees pleading with God, and we are in the streets, trying to make sure that our government understands that it cannot, is not authorised to, and must not attack the people of Iraq without provocation or cause. If the armies of Iraq were to attack another nation, I would be certainly more inclined to allow my government to intervene. If a country were to attack our citizens, I would allow my government to retaliate in kind. But the current circumstances do not allow it. And we the people of the United States do not allow it. If it should happen, God help us all.

We do not hate Iraqis. There are yet many here who love peace and all of God's precious people. And those of us who love God, hate all liars and murderers. So here we are, in a bind, between two presidents who may or may not be lacking in moral strength to see the situation through, so we must do it ourselves. If the people of Iraq and the people of the United States who love God will pray together, as brothers and sisters and children of God should, then there will be no war.

Gary K. Harber
Camarillo, California
USA

كلامنا للامم

Yugoslavia on brink of disaster — experts

BELGRADE (AFP) — Yugoslavia is on the brink of economic disaster, after being deprived of foreign aid and access to international financial institutions and seeing its trade privileges with the European Union revoked this year, experts say.

Federal Yugoslavia, which now groups Serbia and Montenegro, "has no chance of surviving if it fails to fulfil conditions imposed for its reintegration in the international community," said Jovan Rankovic, an economics professor in Belgrade.

These conditions are, above all, introducing democratic reforms in the regime of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, solving problems in Kosovo province, where the ethnic Albanian majority seeks independence from Serbia, and cooperating with the U.N. war crimes tribunal in the Hague.

"If it does not accept these conditions, Yugoslavia will be on the brink of economic disaster," the Belgrade daily Dnevni Telegraph quoted Rankovic as saying.

The influential magazine Ekonomika Politika estimated that 1998 will see an "economic downturn whose rhythm will depend on the number of enterprises the regime will put on sale."

To reflate the state budget, Belgrade last spring sold 49 per cent of the shares of Serbian Telecom to the Italian STET and Greek OTE company for more than \$1.2 billion.

But the government has already spent one-third of this to pay salaries and pensions, which are regularly delayed by two to three months.

With a gross national product (GNP) of \$16 billion in 1997 and annual income of \$1,520 per citizen, Yugoslavia, with its 10.6 million population, is ranked 41st among European countries, Ekonomika Politika said.

Only Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Moldova and Romania are behind Yugoslavia on the list.

The inflation rate passed 20 per cent in 1997 and the dinar, Yugoslavia's national currency, lost some 50 per cent of its value in the last year on the black market, compared to the official value, which is kept at 3.3 dinars to the German mark, the reference currency.

Yugoslav foreign currency reserves total less than \$200 million, according to a Western bank source, an amount that could not even cover one month of the trade deficit.

There are few resources for financing incoming debts, especially \$650 million that Yugoslavia owes China and Russia for petrol and gas imports, said Mladen Dinkic, coordinator of a group of 17 opposition economists.

In 1997, the trade balance registered a deficit of \$2.5 billion and the budget shortage hit \$1 billion, while public debt was up to \$20 billion, or 120 per cent of GNP, Ekonomika Politika said.

Yugoslavia last year registered industrial growth of around nine per cent, but the public expenses represent more than half the GNP.

The unemployment rate is officially 26 per cent, but in fact it comes to some 50 per cent, due to numerous factories and companies temporarily closed down.

Study explores contemporary, politicised Islamic movements in Jordan, seeks to compare them to movements abroad

Islamic Movements in Jordan, supervised by Hani Hourani, written by Gharaibeh, et al, translated by George A. Musleh, Sindbad Publishing, 1997, 294 pages.

THE RESTORATION of parliamentary life in 1989 marked a turning point for the Islamist movement in Jordan, represented then in the Lower House by 22 members of the Muslim Brotherhood. Eight years and one election boycott later, the movement — now represented by the Brotherhood and its political child, the Islamic Action Front, — finds itself on Jordan's political outskirts. Has the movement failed?

A new book on political Islamic movements in Jordan roughly estimates that it has, or, at least, that it has failed to live up to public expectations and meet its own aspirations.

The seven authors of "Islamic Movements in Jordan" give the Muslim Brotherhood only slightly better performance ratings than the IAF, and demonstrate that somehow, the two Islamic bodies have fallen out of sync with each other and have manoeuvred to exclude themselves from the country's political life. Of the IAF in particular, writes Ahmad Jamil Azem, "the outcome of the party experience so far cannot be regarded as a positive one."

"Instead of serving as a support to the Muslim Brotherhood, the IAF has become an additional arena for differences and a costly and tiring instrument without generating any proportionate benefits that could measure up to expectations."

Prior to its experimentation with its own political party, writes Ibrahim Gharaibeh, the "Muslim Brotherhood itself failed to give the cabinet sufficient leverage to survive or to productively employ its weighty parliamentary presence during its short-lived inclusion in the government of Mudar Badran in 1990.

"Moreover," he writes, "its performance as an opposition bloc was largely unsuccessful."

The Muslim Brotherhood's minimal success in the political realm have been compensated by social and charitable works. Waleed Hamad scrutinises the extensive network of voluntary and charitable institutions founded by the Brotherhood and indicates the significance of the Brotherhood's vast financial resources. According to sources quoted in Hamad's chapter on "Islamists and Charitable Work in Jordan," the Brotherhood has some JD200 million at its

early chapters, the moderate tendency of Jordan's own Islamic movement and its historic friendly relations with both the government and the Hashemites.

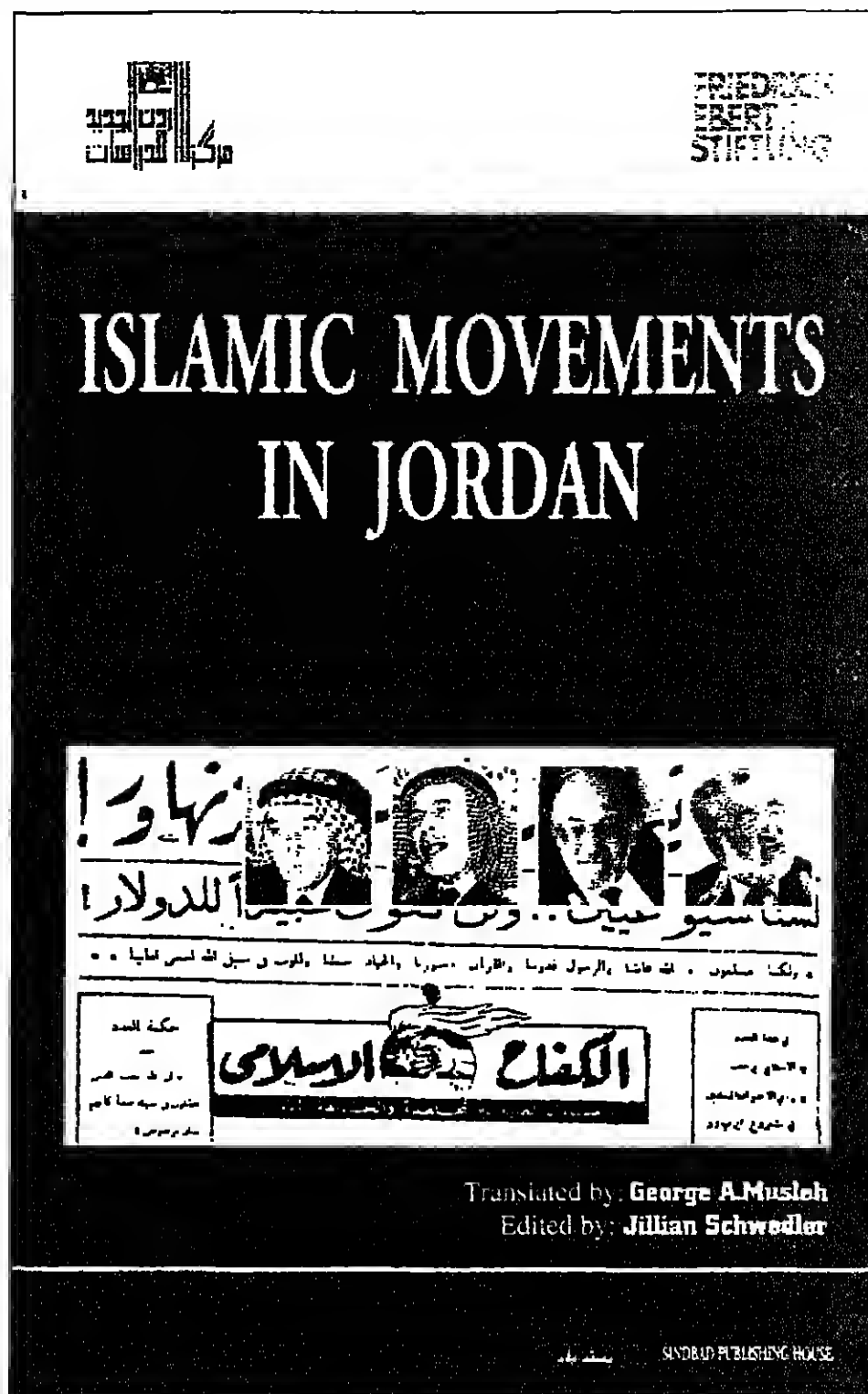
The text falls short in comparative analysis of Islamic movements in other countries, limiting the discussion mainly to the early allegiance to the Egyptian Brotherhood, an influential element in the Brotherhood's foundation here.

Instead, authors have concentrated on revealing the controversial dynamics and ill-defined relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and the IAF, the combination of which has created a struggle between the two for the upper hand of the Islamic political movement in the country. A chapter on the "Organisational Structure of the Muslim Brotherhood" outlines the intricate internal structures of both and marks the distinctions between the two.

The discourse within Brotherhood and IAF ranks concerning the appropriateness of Islamist participation in the government is also well documented in a chapter dedicated to political engagement trends.

Most significantly, the book reviews the parliamentary performance of the Islamists, taking a critical stand and claiming that the IAF over the last years has ceded a number of gains achieved by its Brotherhood forefathers: the loss of the ability to use mosques as political pulpits; the loss of seats in the Lower House in the 1993 elections; major losses in municipal elections. The IAF has also failed to effectively influence Lower House colleagues in voting on

major issues such as the ratification of the peace treaty with Israel and has been slow to capitalise on opportunities to coordinate stands with other opposition forces. The authors at the same time justly recognise the change in 1993 of the election law, and measure the Islamists' gains and losses of the Islamists in



the Lower House against this background.

For those unversed in Jordanian Islamic polity, the book will be a useful foundation to understand future developments within and between the two organisations as well as their relationship with the government.

Criticisms of the book are two. The reader might be distracted by weak editing and a dry layout,

although this is to a large extent compensated by content.

The content itself, however, fails to give much prominence to the Islamists' boycott of last November's parliamentary elections. The boycott not only emphasised a growing crisis within the government and the Islamists, but a crisis within the Islamic movement itself, and most significantly, it created a

political vacuum in the Lower House. This important issue was relegated to the conclusion of the book, implying that the boycott is of secondary importance. It is apparent that the text was written prior to the elections, but a reader could have hoped for better timing for the book's release.

Amy Henderson

King to visit UAE, Oman to push Jordan's direct dialogue initiative

(Continued from page 1)

ington though the idea needed further development.

His Majesty is expected to pursue the initiative with President Clinton during an upcoming meeting in Washington around March 15.

However, the King said he did not know when and how the proposed dialogue will happen.

Iraq, which averted a U.S.-led military strike by striking an arms inspection deal with the United Nations eight days ago granting unlimited access to weapons sites, has not commented on the King's plan.

Many officials in private say they are buoyed by a perceived new attitude in the Iraqi leadership suggesting Baghdad would comply with the provisions of the deal in order to get sanctions lifted.

Official sources said Jordan also intended to present its direct dialogue proposal to the Arab League to muster official support among its 22 members.

Jordan believes that any thaw in American-Iraqi ties, marred since the 1990 Gulf

crisis that was sparked by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, could encourage Gulf Arab states to mend fences with Baghdad after an eight-year rupture.

News of the Jordanian initiative was broken in Amman on Friday by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Jawad Anani.

"The idea is still being developed and we believe that His Majesty's initiative will eventually win the day because it is the only way to resolve the Iraqi problem once and for all," Dr Anani said.

Jordan's ties with the UAE have improved in recent years because of differences over the 1990-91 Gulf crisis.

Jordan refused to send troops to the U.S.-led Western military alliance that ended Iraq's seven-month occupation of Kuwait in February 1991, angering Gulf Arab and Western allies.

The King last visited Abu Dhabi in December 1997.

Jordan's relations with Oman have always been close.

Annan kept tight lid on Baghdad talks — Brahimi

(Continued from page 1)

only a few minutes after it was signed. "God knows, though, how the Americans had insisted," he said.

Mr. Brahimi said Iraqi President Saddam Hussein turned a meeting with the U.N. team from a brief ceremony in which he was to say only a few words before starting private talks with Mr. Annan into an hour-and-a-half monologue.

President Hussein "spoke of his country's history, of the unbearable weight of the trade embargo, he paid tribute to France and French President Jacques Chirac, spoke of the suffering of his people and even told some anecdotes," Mr. Brahimi said.

Mr. Chirac championed a diplomatic solution to the Iraq crisis.

Mr. Brahimi said in the interview that President Hus-

sein told a story about an Algerian and an Iraqi arguing over which country produced the better dates.

Threatened at knife point, the Iraqi conceded Algeria had the better ones but added: "I did not change my mind because of your knife, but because I feared to lose our friendship."

Algerian Mr. Brahimi said he interrupted the Iraqi leader to joke that Algerian dates were the best.

President Hussein laughed and had dates delivered to him later. Mr. Brahimi then sent a message to President Hussein acknowledging that Iraqi dates were best.

Mr. Brahimi said an exhausted Mr. Annan fell asleep on the flight back from Baghdad. He had to be awakened when the loaned French government aircraft made a stopover in Amman and Crown Prince Hassan turned up at the airport.

Annan warns Baghdad against backsliding on inspection deal

(Continued from page 1)

council, if Baghdad blocks the U.N. arms inspectors.

"We do not want automaticity," Mr. Lavrov told reporters.

The latest draft submitted to the council on Monday stresses that Iraq must "accord immediate, unconditional and unrestricted access to the Special Commission and the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency]" in line with U.N. resolutions.

"Any violation would have severe consequences," the draft warns. The language of the warning has ranged from "severe" to "very severe" since the Council began discussing the resolution last week.

The Security Council draft endorses the Baghdad accord, signed by U.N. chief Kofi Annan and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz on Feb. 23, providing for unfettered access to all sites by the U.N. weapons inspectors.

The council "looks forward to its early and full implementation."

Guidelines for so-called presidential sites, contained in the Baghdad agreement, are being finalised here and are expected to be tested in the coming days.

Brazilian Ambassador Celso Luiz Nunes Amorim on Friday proposed an amendment specifying that the U.N. Security Council would discuss any future violation of the U.N. resolutions.

However, the latest draft on Monday did not mention further U.N. Security

Council consultations to discuss the possible consequences for Iraq.

Mr. Owada played down the notion of an automatic military response, saying that "in the minds of the co-sponsors it has never been there."

He said the main issue was to ensure Iraqi compliance with the U.N. disarmament resolutions adopted after the 1991 Gulf war.

Washington has said that it has no need of a further U.N. resolution to strike Iraq if the U.N. weapons inspectors are blocked again by Baghdad.

The accord negotiated by Mr. Annan ended a four-month standoff with Iraq over the U.N. inspections, which aim to verify the destruction of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Amorim said that Monday's efforts would focus on "some kind of language that somehow would reassure those of us who think it is absolutely necessary to have authorisation of the Security Council, without changing what was in previous resolutions."

Meanwhile, Britain is replacing its aircraft carrier HMS Invincible which has been deployed in the Gulf since January as part of a U.S.-led buildup against Iraq, a British naval spokesman said here Monday.

Lieutenant Commander Philip Payton said the HMS Illustrious sailed into the Gulf at the weekend and would take over from the Invincible this week.

The two ships are of the

same class, and each carries 1,200 sailors and air crew as well as some 15 Harrier jump jets and six Sea King attack helicopters. They are around 200 metres in length.

"The flag transfer is expected to be completed by March 8," Lt. Com. Payton told AFP from the British embassy in Manama, where the Invincible was anchored on Sunday before heading off to meet up with the Illustrious for a handover.

Britain, which like Washington has kept up its guard to ensure Iraq abides by its Feb. 23 accord with Mr. Annan on arms inspections, also has the frigate Coventry and destroyer Nottingham in the Gulf.

It has sent eight laser-guided Tornado bombers to Kuwait, and has another six of the planes based in Turkey and the same number in Saudi Arabia.

Israel holds memorial ceremony for seven girls killed at Baqoura

(Continued from page 1)

"will continue to find ways to strengthen the peace between [the two countries]."

But for people like Pichi Yisrael, whose 13-year-old daughter, Sivan, was one of those killed, peace with Jordan seems a long way off.

"I feel bad. I have a lot of doubts about peace with Jordan," he told the Jordan Times.

"The majority of us in Israel love King Hussein, but we now know that there is large opposition in Jordan to peace," continued the 48-year-old man of Yemenite descent.

His 21-year-old daughter echoed his sentiments. "It's hard to think about peace since the killing. My sister Sivan believed in peace. I didn't before, and I [certainly] don't now," said Shlomit.

The shooting, carried out by 26-year-old Corporal Ahmad Musa Dakamseh, greatly angered King Hussein, who described the incident as "a

national shame."

King Hussein went to Israel three days later to personally convey his condolences to the families of the victims.

After a four-month trial by the State Security Court, Cpl. Dakamseh was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment with hard labour.

The five-man military court found the soldier — whose defence pleaded he was suffering from an "anti-social mental disorder" — not guilty of premeditated murder. The court convicted him of "intentional murder."

A memorial ceremony of the shooting was initially set to take place last May, with the attendance of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Mr. Netanyahu, but was cancelled at the last minute.

Reports then said that it was cancelled because Jordanian and Israeli officials failed to conclude talks on bilateral water issues taking place at the time.

One Jordanian source request-

ing anonymity said that Jordan has been delaying the ceremony for "political considerations," mostly because of the deadlock in the peace process, he told the Jordan Times.

He said that Jordan has been reluctant to hold the memorial ceremony on Jordanian soil, and finally agreed to host part of it on the site of the killings as a gesture of respect.

The source added that Jordan insisted that Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Mordechai only attend the ceremony on the Israeli side of the border, "so that their Jordanian counterparts would not be forced to attend as well," he said.

Jordan's ties with Israel have been marred since the deadlock on the Palestinian-Israeli track, held at a standstill since the signing of the Hebron accords in January 1997.

Relations reached their lowest point in the aftermath of the Mossad's botched assassination attempt on a Hamas leader, Khaled Misha'al, in Amman on Sept. 25.

Only people of country can make changes in its leadership — King

(Continued from page 1)

to say that we, as responsible leaders, should work for the benefit of the coming generations and implore God to help us succeed in this mission."

In reply to a question on ways to revive the peace process, particularly on the Palestinian-Israeli track, the King said: "We should return to the principles on which the whole concept of the peace process was founded. We must go back to resolutions 242 and 338 and the exchange of land for peace. We have to see the agreements implemented so that people can feel the results."

Referring to the Arab stand

vis-a-vis perceived U.S. double standards in its Mideast policies, the King said: "We in the Arab World feel that the two issues in the region are being dealt with two different criteria, and this is unacceptable and unjustified."

He said that he has already discussed this issue several times with the Americans and other international parties.

Calling on the Arab countries to provide sufficient support and backing for the Palestinians, King Hussein said that this is needed to help the establishment of a just, honourable and comprehensive peace and the creation of an independent Palestinian state on Palestinian soil with its capital in

Jerusalem as well as the restoration of the occupied Golan Heights and the Lebanese territories.

Referring to Jordan's reaction to the recent developments in the region, King Hussein said: "Jordan is always affected by these developments and has been paying heavy prices every time. Jordan shoulders heavy burdens," but he added that Jordan hopes to set a good example in democracy for the other countries because lack of democracy and freedom lies behind the general weakness and the pain as well as the suffering of people in this region.

As to ways to improve Arab-Turkish relations, he said:

"Turkey is our neighbour with whom we have established strong relations. Furthermore, Turkey has supported the Arab view that Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity should be respected. Our relations with Turkey and other countries in the region should be strengthened because we have common interests and we have to establish relations based on mutual respect, clarity and frankness."

On Jordan's relations with the Gulf states, King Hussein said: "Jordan maintains very strong relations with all of them expressing hope that these relations will be further bolstered in the future."

Ammari: Jordan will continue reform without help from IMF

By Issam Qadmani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan does not intend to embark on a new economic restructuring programme with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the coming year, according to the Ministry of Planning Secretary General Nabil Ammari.

"The economic restructuring programme which Jordan has been implementing in cooperation with the IMF ends this year but Jordan has no intention of renewing or extending it," said Dr. Ammari.

He indicated that Jordan has worked out a five-year plan in 1991 to pursue economic reforms and stressed that the Kingdom will continue this programme without seeking help from the IMF or other organisations.

He said Jordan is determined not to retreat from the path of economic reforms and will maintain very strong relations with the World Bank in the course of reforms which will take place in the sectors of water, health and education among others where the Kingdom is still in need of the World Bank's advice and support.

He pointed out that social ills, like poverty and unemployment, require greater efforts and that the government is determined to implement the social safety package in order to deal with these issues.

"The economic restructuring programme has not succeeded in dealing with poverty and unemployment problems although it has succeeded in keeping inflation at four per cent over the past years," Dr. Ammari explained.

Dr. Ammari emphasised the government was going ahead with the privatisation of public institutions because such a programme will improve Jordan's image and will attract more investments to the Kingdom.

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Egypt seeks to conquer African market

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa launches a diplomatic offensive Tuesday to conquer the African market during a seven-nation tour of west Africa.

Until March 12, Mr. Musa will visit Niger, Senegal, Guinea, the Ivory Coast, Mali, Ghana and Chad.

Egypt was among the first countries to set up diplomatic relations with African states upon their independence in the 1960s but economic cooperation never took off.

According to official estimates the trade deficit between Egypt and the rest of the African continent stands at \$632 million annually in favour of Africa.

Egypt, a key member of

the Organisation of African Unity, buys mostly cocoa and coffee from its African partners.

But trade links with the seven nations which Mr. Musa will visit are almost non-existent, representing a mere three million pounds (under \$500,000) while those countries globally import goods worth \$7 billion from the rest of the world.

Egypt wants to double its exports to those seven countries in 1998 and raise total exports to all of the African continent from \$150 million in 1997 to \$1 billion over the next five years.

Mohamed Shaaban, head of African affairs at the Egyptian foreign ministry, said Mr. Musa's tour will complement trips which took him to the east and south of the continent in April and August.

"Africa is a promising market," said Mr. Shaaban.

Mr. Musa will be accompanied by 45 businessmen from the construction, pharmaceutical and food industries who will seek to set up joint ventures with their African counterparts, Mr. Shaaban said.

A total of 44 agreements to promote trade, investment and cultural ties, scrap double taxation and bolster cooperation in various fields will be signed during the trip.

Transport agreements will top the list, officials said, noting that the lack of road, air and sea links between Egypt and west Africa is one of main obstacles preventing stronger economic ties.

Egyptian industrialists said plans to set up a sea link between the Egyptian port of Alexandria and western African ports financed by the African Development Bank was shelved because of the small volume of trade.

Experts also noted that heavy duties were another obstacle to greater trade relations and said Egypt will try to obtain preferential agreements with the African countries.

Egypt would also like to secure deals to build roads, housing units and hospitals.

Mr. Musa's trip comes on the heels of a visit to Ivory Coast by Health Minister Ismail Sallam and Trade Minister Ahmed Al Gowell during which three agreements were signed to consolidate trade links over the next five years.

"This visit helped us discover new markets for Egyptian medicine," Mr. Sallam said in a statement, adding that Ivory Coast only produces eight per cent of its medicine needs.

Japan under fire for low investment in Arab oil states

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Japan has once again come under fire for its relatively low investment in Arab Gulf oil producers although it is their biggest commercial partner and they are its main source of energy.

Japan's direct investments in the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries are estimated at less than one per cent of its worldwide investment, the Doha-based Gulf Organisation for Industrial

Consulting (GOIC) said in a study published in the official media.

"Over the past half a century, Japanese investments in the Gulf have not exceeded \$6.3 billion, less than seven per thousand of total Japanese investments," GOIC said in the study on GCC-Japan relations.

"Gulf states should open up to Japan, cooperate in setting up joint industrial ventures, and attract more Japanese

investment."

But the study blamed restrictive investment laws in the 17-year-old economic, political and defence Gulf alliance for the low Japanese capital.

It also criticised the GCC private sector for its poor participation in economic talks with Japanese businessmen despite its expanding role in the domestic economy because of reforms.

"The private sector in the GCC should play a key role in attracting capital. So far, the meetings with the Japanese on economic and trade cooperation have been dominated by the GCC governments," it said.

"Gulf countries also need to improve investment laws, especially those dealing with foreign capital. This could be done through the unification of investment laws and customs regulations in member states," the study added.

"Such a move will provide security and stability for Japanese investors," it emphasised.

Japanese industrialists have been reluctant to commit themselves to major projects in the GCC although industrial ventures in the region are among the most profitable in the world given its cheap energy and labour.

Their argument is that investment laws do not allow foreigners to fully own projects in most cases and customs tariffs are widely varied in the six members despite their long standing efforts to unify duties.

In contrast with the invest-

ments, Japan is the top economic partner of the GCC, with their two-way trade standing at \$37.5 billion in 1996.

The balance has remained largely in favour of the GCC nations over the past two decades because of their high oil exports to the Far East giant. The six members supply Japan with more than two-thirds of its total crude imports.

GCC states, sitting atop nearly 45 per cent of the world's oil, have held several rounds of talks with Japan in a bid to lure industrial capital needed for their attempts to diversify their economies and lessen reliance on unpredictable crude export earnings.

Similar meetings were also held with their other trading partners — the European Union and the United States.

GOIC, which advises on government industrial policies in the GCC, said there were wide investment opportunities for Japan in the region, mainly in steel, aluminium, and petrochemicals.

"Time is right to attract Japanese capital into the petrochemical sector," it said, referring to multi-billion-dollar chemical projects announced by some GCC members to tap their enormous gas resources.

"The two sides should also create joint companies to carry out some of the GCC's infrastructure projects that need tens of billions of dollars in investment... GCC businessmen have to knock at Japan's door."

Qatar takes first step to privatisation

DOHA (R) — Qatar has taken the first step in a planned privatisation scheme by transferring the operation and maintenance of a power and water desalination plant to a public company and signing a deal to buy the plant's production.

"This is the beginning of a privatisation programme in the country," said the minister of finance, economy and trade, Youssef Hussein Kamal, after signing a plant transfer and power and water sales-and-purchase agreement with Qatar Electricity and Water Company (QEWC).

He told reporters that a World Bank report suggesting large-scale privatisation of other government-owned industries was under review.

QEWC, capitalised at one billion riyals (\$275 million), is 43 per cent state-owned and 57 per cent by Qatari investors.

The minister of electricity and water, Ahmad Mohammad Ali Al Subai'e, who is chairman of QEWC, signed

the deal for the company.

Mr. Kamal said the government will buy 80 per cent of QEWC's production.

Qatari citizens are exempt from power and water tariffs but expatriates pay six Qatari dirhams per kWh of power and 4.40 riyal per cubic metre of water.

Mr. Kamal said the tariff was 40 per cent subsidised by the government.

QEWC will operate Ras Abu Fontas-A power and water desalination plant which currently produces 650 megawatt of power and 33 million gallons a day of water.

Qatar's two other power and desalination plants — Ras Abu Fontas-B and Ras Abu Aboud — will continue to be run by the ministry of electricity and water. Together the two plants produce 550 megawatts of electricity and 30 million gallons of water.

Subai'e said the agreement will take effect from July, when the government completes the handover of the plant to QEWC.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You're not generally the most practical person in the world, but today could be an exception. It looks like your business sense is good. You're also listening a little more than you have in the past. An older person has some excellent advice. Be receptive.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Right now you still have a slight advantage. That means you'll be able to work a deal that's a little more in your favour. That's always something to take into consideration when making commitments, romantic or otherwise. Better make your move now.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) There's all sorts of wheeling and dealing taking place behind the scenes. If you're going to figure out what's really going on, practice your listening skills. Talking won't help. In fact, even asking questions could be counterproductive. You're pretty smart, so don't bother to ask.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) A stroke of brilliance this morning can lead you into action. You're being forced to apply what you're learning almost before you're ready, but that's OK. If you can work an older person's advice into the equation, you'll be even more successful.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) An older person you respect and admire can help you get the money you want. It may not come directly, though. Start by explaining what you need and why. If you're investing in a business, it's relatively easy to get the cash. If you want to buy toys, forget it.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) It should be pretty easy to see what needs to be done. You may not know how to do it, but that's OK. You're learning quickly. Your ability to make practical decisions is also excellent. Go ahead and do that. Avoid confusion tomorrow by making the choice now.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Your determination saves the day, as you refuse to let yourself quit. This is because you're something special. It's nice to have a very attractive carrot at the end of that stick, to keep yourself motivated. When the going gets tough, the tough go shopping!

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Make plans you both can get enthusiastic about. This could be a relationship with a child or with a collaborator in a creative endeavour. If you're all alone, go where interesting people meet. Your odds of finding a new friend are excellent. Make it happen.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You can have what you want for your home and family. There's work involved, but it will be good for you. By the time you get finished with this project, you'll be a master draftsman. Make the commitment to your dream. As you gain security, you'll also gain more freedom.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Your amazing lucky streak lasts for yet another day. Don't start taking it for granted. Conditions are changing. It's not that your luck will go bad, it's just that you'll have to work harder. At least begin what you want, by telling somebody or writing it down. This could work.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) It's time to buy something for your home, or maybe even real estate. That's possible, you know, even if you're not a wealthy person. You have a lot of contacts because you have a lot of friends. Let them know what you're looking for.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Your recent successes are adding to your confidence, as well they might. You've been showing up brilliantly lately. Many of your friends and relatives have taken notice, and so has your boss or teacher. Everybody suspected you had talent; now they're sure of it. Relax.

Birthstone of March: Aquamarine — Jasper

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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Aqaba, areas between Amman and airport seen promising real estate investments

Building activity is moving towards the Queen Alia International Airport and the vast area separating Amman from the airport is expected to witness a construction boom, both commercial and residential, the general manager of a consultancy firm has said. Noting that internationally construction activity usually moves to the environs of airports, he indicated that the zone between Amman and the airport in Jizah is presently witnessing a number of real estate investments, such as hotels and tourist clubs.

According to Hazem Shahin, the general manager of the Philadelphia Group of Administrative Consultancy, the building activity in Amman is much weaker than that in the direction of the airport. "Many people are eyeing the area between Amman and Jizah for construction," Engineer Shahin emphasised. He said that despite high prices of land and real estate in Jordan, they are low compared to those in many countries of the world. "This should be considered as an encouragement for foreign investment in the Kingdom," he added, noting that for any investment to succeed, it primarily depends on low prices of fixed assets and the good investment climate. Mr. Shahin said land prices in the Kingdom have remained stable over the past few years after passing through a period of "speculation and instability," between 1990 and 1995.

Another region seen promising by real estate dealers is Aqaba which is attracting buyers especially after it was approved to become a free zone. The dealers point out that land prices in Aqaba have increased by 40 per cent per dunum. They foresee a real recovery in real estate investment and stress that the construction activity in Aqaba will be very strong in line with the new economic plans for the city. The dealers said that despite the rise in land prices in Aqaba, the price is still much below those of similar areas in other countries of the region (Al Aswak).

After hard year, British banks to cut costs in '98

LONDON (AFP) — After a hard year in 1997, British banks are paring back operations and concentrating on their core business to cut costs and become more competitive.

With the last of the 1997 financial results in, it is clear that the British banking sector faces increased competition from newcomers, ranging from former building societies to super-market banks, and pressure for mergers, analysts said.

"It's increasingly difficult to cut costs. They've already done a lot of the things they had to do," said David Townsend, at Goldman Sachs.

"So you know the environment is turning more hostile. That's why a lot of people think there will be mergers," he said. "The big carrot will be consolidation."

Meanwhile in Asia,

British banks HSBC and Standard Chartered reported strong results in 1997, but investors worry that there are still danger spots ahead in the region's turbulent economy.

For Barclays and NatWest, the two best known high-street banks, 1997 was the year they cut back on ambitious, but unsuccessful forays into the investment banking sector.

Now they will concentrate on traditional retail banking business in a bid to slash costs and boost competitiveness.

Big rival Lloyds TSB, which has stayed out of investment banking, reported the best performance in 1997, with a huge 26 per cent rise in pre-tax profits in 1997 to 3,162 billion pounds (\$5.185 billion).

Barclays, however, reported a fall of almost 26 per cent in pre-tax profits to

1.71 billion pounds (\$2.78 billion) in 1997.

The loss was largely inflicted by costs related to the sell-off of Barclay's investment banking venture BZW and does not reflect on the company's general health, Chairman Andrew Buxton said.

Chief executive Martin Taylor said 1998 will be the year that Barclays tries to "concentrate rather than dissipate resources."

It was a similar story at National Westminster (NatWest).

1997 pre-tax profits dropped 9.9 per cent to 1.011 billion pounds in losses blamed on NatWest markets, the group's investment arm.

It lost 706 million pounds (\$1,150 million), including a 292 million pound (\$476 million) charge for terminating its equity brokerage operations.

"1997 was a difficult year and our overall results were poor," NatWest Chairman Lord Alexander said. "This was largely because of losses at NatWest markets and our decision to exit the equities business and take the restructuring costs."

But he added that NatWest was now "concentrating on those commercial and retail banking businesses which are our core strengths."

The two big British Asia-based banks, Standard Chartered and HSBC, did well in 1997, given the financial collapse across the region.

Standard Chartered announced what it said were "excellent" results for 1997 and gave a strong vote of confidence to the Asian region, which it predicted would recover economically in about two years.

The bank, whose main

operations base is in Asia, was affected by the economic crisis in the region, notably in the form of a higher debt charge, but said it was pleased with a pre-tax profit of 870 million pounds (\$1.43 billion), unchanged from 1996.

HSBC reported gains in consolidated pre-tax profit of 10 per cent from a year earlier to 4.97 billion pounds (\$8.15 billion), with net profit up 7.9 per cent at 5.36 billion pounds.

But financial turmoil in Asia forced it to set aside sizeable funds as a buffer to bad debt and uncertainty ahead.

John Leonard, at Salomon Smith Barney, said that in Asia "1998 is going to be a tricky year," although 1997 was "less than we had feared" for Standard Chartered and HSBC.

Commercial Union, General Accident merge into insurance giant

LONDON (AFP) — British companies Commercial Union and General Accident have announced a merger to form the biggest broad-based insurance group in Britain, worth about 15 billion pounds.

The new group, called CGU, will make savings of 225 million pounds (\$360 million) in two years and

will cut 5,000 jobs from the 53,000 combined workforce, Commercial Union said in a statement.

The new company will have combined pre-tax operating profit of 962 million (\$1,577 million) pounds and 100 billion pounds (\$163 billion) of assets under management worldwide.

The merger will take effect at the end of June, with Commercial Union shareholders holding 53.6 per cent of the share capital and General Accident shareholders 46.4 per cent.

With stock market capitalisation of almost 15 billion pounds (\$24 billion), CGU will outsize current number one diversified British

insurance company Royal Sun Alliance, which was created in a merger in 1996.

It will be second largest in non-life insurance and fifth in life insurance.

The merger is in line with what analysts believe to be a general trend in Europe's insurance industry, which has seen German Allianz's battle to buy French AGF

and the merger of Swiss Zurich and British BAT.

Commercial Union chief executive Sir John Carter said that "the merger of Commercial Union and General Accident will create a world class insurance group with the scale, financial strength and management depth to take a leading role in the international financial services industry."

General Accident chief executive Bob Scott said that the two businesses shared "common strategies" and their combination would "constitute a powerful platform for future profitable growth."

"We believe that the merger will create significant value for our shareholders," he said.

About 3,000 of the jobs to be cut are expected to be in Britain.

Roger Lyons, general secretary of the MSF white-collar union, said he would be pressing against involuntary firing of staff.

"Financial sector mergers are threatening too many quality jobs and careers and so the MSF will be taking all necessary steps," he said.

Russian firms seen needing more protection

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian firms are losing \$1 billion annually owing to Western anti-dumping measures and need more government protection to compete against imports, First Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov has said.

Interfax news agency said Mr. Nemtsov had called for "national customs protectionism," which would involve increasing tariffs on finished imported goods and lowering those on imported components.

"Our aim is to protect the interests of Russian manufacturers on both export and domestic markets," Mr. Nemtsov told a new lobby group of manufacturers called "Buy Russian," at a Moscow factory.

Mr. Nemtsov said Russian firms were losing \$1 billion annually owing to 55 anti-dumping restrictions imposed by Western countries, while not a single anti-dumping investigation had been launched in Russia against a foreign firm.

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates		Prices as at 2/03/98 19:27	
Currency	Rate	Currency	Rate
US Dollar	1.5119	0.8068	1.4842
DE Mark	0.6619	0.3947	0.8078
GB Sterling	1.6477	2.3860	2.4114
CH Franc	0.6890	123.67	0.4141
JP Yen	0.0080	1.4435	0.4832
CA Dollar	0.7011	1.2701	0.4261
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0168	0.3400
NL Guilder	0.4899	98.70	0.2971
FR Franc	0.1648	0.2981	0.0898


Middle Eastern Currencies		Prices as at 2/03/98 19:27	
Currency	Rate	Currency	Rate
US Dollar	0.7090	3.7503	0.3770
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	0.2886	0.5937
Saudi Riyal	0.2886	0.1891	0.1005
Bahraini Dinar	2.65	1.8806	0.9477
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1947	1.0301
Kuwait Dinar	3.2806	0.2321	0.2389
Emirati Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0211
Lebanese L1000	0.85	0.4840	0.2454
Egyptian	0.2892	0.2079	1.0995

Energy		Mid-East Currencies	
Currency	Rate	Currency	Rate
Brent	13.49	SA Riyal	0.2886
WT Texas	16.34	AQ Dinar	0.2723
Bonny	13.49	KW Dinar	3.2806
Dubai	11.70	BH Dinar	0.3770
UL Gas	157.00	CY Pound	1.8801

Metal Prices		Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)	
Metal	Rate	Period	Rate
Gold (oz's)	288.7	USD	5.63
Silver (oz's)	5.61	GBP	7.45
Platinum (oz's)	388	JPY	0.52
AL (3 Months)	N/A	DEM	3.40
CU (3 Months)	N/A	FRF	0.53
Zinc (3 Months)	N/A	CHF	0.53
Lead (3 Months)	N/A	ITL	5.99
Ni (3 Months)	N/A		

Main Equity Indices		JOD Cross Rates	
Index	Value	Currency	Rate
New York	DOW JONES	US Dollar	0.708
New York	S&P 500	GB Sterling	1.172
London	FT-SE 100	DE Mark	0.3921
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	CH Franc	0.4848
Paris	CAC 40	FR Franc	0.1168
Frankfurt	DAX	JP Yen	0.5848

Energy		JOD Cross Rates	
Currency	Rate	Currency	Rate
Coffee (c/lb)	188.25	US Dollar	0.708
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1451	GB Sterling	1.172
Sugar (\$/ton)	271	DE Mark	0.3921
Wheat (\$/ton)	0	CH Franc	0.4848
Soya (c/lb)	28.85	FR Franc	0.1168
Tea (c/kg)	180	JP Yen	0.5848
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	NL Guilder	0.3479
Rice (\$/ton)	400	IT Lira	0.3979

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET										
HOUSING BANK CENTRAL BANK SEMI-ANNUAL										
TELEPHONE 607171 / 607179										
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 02/03/1998										
										
LAST 12 MONTHS HIGH		COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	OLV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 237.13 %CHG: -0.15 40 23038 149525										
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 122.89 %CHG: 0.00 8 1250 2928										
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 117.79 %CHG: -0.19 44 24862 45360										
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 114.58 %CHG: +0.54 419 359925 966921										
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 170.76 %CHG: +0.08 511 407695 1166734										
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 02/03/1998										
N	1.050	560	EXPORT & FTH. BHK. 751	E	0.00	1	1500	1110	.99	.99
N	400	480	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	E	0.00	3	1500	387	.32	.34
N	530	340	JOR. TRADE PAC.	10.4	0.00	16	56750	22138	.40	.39
N	660	480	NATL. COMMER. CENTERS	E	0.00	1	250	148	.56	.59
N	600	600	UNION INV. FUND	9	0.00	7	2090	899	.72	.72
N	620	360	ARAB FTH. INVEST.	9	0.00	15	28050	14684	.49	.48
N	36.000	1.050	JOR. TOURIST TRANS. CO	9	2.50	2	7272	7999	1.10	1.10
N	780	610	AL-DAMASTIR 751	68.1	0.00	2	736	336	.68	.71
N	1.000	1.000	ARAB JOR. INVEST. CO	E	0.00	1	1000	1000	1.00	1.00
N	290	140	JOR. INDS. MATCH-JESCO	E	0.00	1	1000	140	.14	.14
N	640	370	ARAB FOOD & MED.	E	0.00	2	1000	440	.55	.44
N	140	140	ARAB TEXT. & CLOTH. IND.	33.4	0.00	28	61450	17821	.28	.29
N	540	280	NATL. TEXTILE	9	0.00	14	1400	3413	.35	.32
N	750	360	NATL. MULT. BNG. NMTCO	9	0.00	32	83000	32390	.40	.39
N	1.10	990	READY MIX CONCRETE	13.3	0.00	20	2000	2205	1.14	1.10
N	670	580	MIDEST PART. GROUP	9	0.00	15	14750	14770	.66	.66
N	730	550	RAJZ PARM.	E	0.00	2	1018	732	.72	.72
N	830	550	GEN. CHEMICAL	14.4	0.00	20	5700	3125	.54	.55
N	950	550	ADVANCED PHARMAS. IND.	50	0.00	10	10350	10355	.65	.65
N	670	420	PEARL SAN. P. CONV.	E	0.00	1	1400	164	.42	.41
N	740	480	JO. POLYMER	E	0.00	13	17000	9640	.58	.56
N	950	470	OPTICAL HEATING 751	E	32	102500	39215	.50	.52	
N	1.310	1.000	NETSTADAR	E	0.00	1	500	555	1.13	1.11
N	1.000	750	KUDAL PRINT CO. 751	E	0.00	17	30900	19277	.84	.87
GRAND TOTAL						240	470516	210754		
I : New 12 months high + : New 12 months low S : Stock dividend during the past 12 months L : Listed during the past 12 months P : P/E ratio 10 or more - : Negative P/E N : Not listed in J.S.M. or N/A for the past month year										

Sampras notches 1st tournament win of season

PHILADELPHIA (AFP) — Pete Sampras stretched his reign as the World's No. 1 player to 99 consecutive weeks on Sunday by winning his first tournament of the season — beating third-seed Thomas Enqvist in the final of the ATP tournament here.

But the 26-year-old American was pushed hard before he gratefully snatched a 7-5, 7-6 (7/3) victory over the stubborn Swede who once again displayed the excellent form which enabled him to triumph in Marseille three weeks ago. Sampras, who hadn't won a title since his success at the ATP Championships in Hanover last November and who was beaten by Andre Agassi in the San Jose final two weeks ago, was clearly determined to set the record straight.

Having been under pressure earlier in the week when Australian Open champion Petr Korda had an outside chance of overtaking him in the rankings (a chance which disappeared when the Czech bowed out before the quarter-finals of the ATP event at Battersea Park in London), Sampras desperately wanted a win in Philadelphia to restore his confidence.

Against Enqvist he started well, breaking the Swede in the second game. But he came dangerously close to letting Enqvist off the hook when he was serving for the set at 5-3

by double-faulting to allow his opponent back to 5-4. But he made no mistakes in the next game, taking the set with a wonderful forehand cross-court passing shot.

In the second set Enqvist kept up the pressure with his nagging baseline accuracy and he broke Sampras in the third game.

The world number-one fought back, not without a little help from a net-cord shot, to make it 4-4 and then punished the Swede in the tie-break and took the title with another superb cross-court forehand.

"You cannot afford to make an error. If you do that, you're going to lose to him for sure," said Enqvist, who has now lost seven of eight matches against the American.

Sampras who won the first of his 53 career titles in Philadelphia in 1990, also won the event in 1992 and 1997, admitted: "All week I had been struggling with the first couple of games and today I got off to an unbelievable start.

"I won 11 of the first 12 points and I just held on. I played some really good tennis when I had to. My serve was up and down throughout the match. He's a tough player and when he gets his game going, he's tough to beat."

Balakhonova sets indoor world record

VALENCIA (AFP) — Anzhela Balakhonova of Ukraine set a new world record for the women's indoor pole vault when she cleared 4m45 at the European indoor athletics championships here on Sunday.

The previous record of 4m44 was set by Iceland's Vala Flosadottir on February 14 in Eskilstuna, Sweden.

Jonathan Edwards and John Mayock struck gold for Britain — Edwards emulating the triple-jump success of Ashia Hansen on Saturday to capture his first major title for three years, and Mayock muscling his way to the 3,000m crown in a bruising race.

Edwards cleared 17m43 to beat Germany's Charles Friedek (17m15) into second place, and Mayock powered home in 7min 55.09secs ahead of Spain's Manuel Pancorbo (7:55.23) and Alberto Garcia (7:55.24). Mayock shrugged off the jeers from the home crowd, who were upset when he pushed his way between the Spanish runners on the final lap. He later claimed he had been pushed as well.

"I know how the hull feels now," said the Cannock runner, who is coached by former Olympic medalist Peter Elliott.

"They were pushing me all over the place."

The women's 60m hurdles went to France's Patricia Girard in 7.85secs. She finished ahead of Svetlana Laukhova of Russia and Diane Allagreen of Britain, while the men's 60m hurdles went to Latvia's Igor Kazanov (7.54secs).

Ruslan Maschenko of Russia dominated the men's 400m in 45.90secs to beat Ashraf Saber of Italy into second place while Grit Breuer of Germany won the men's 400m in 50.45secs.

Poland's Artur Partyka cleared 2m31 to take the men's high-jump, and Italy's Fiona May dominated the women's long-jump with a 6m91 effort.

Sergei Posovich of the Ukraine set the pace in the men's 200m, finishing in 20.40sec ahead of Aninos Marcoulides of Cyprus (20.65) and Allyn Condon of Britain (20.68).

And Germany's Nils Schumann scored a victory in the men's 800m by clocking 1:47.02. Marko Koers of the Netherlands finished in second place.

Villeneuve-Schumacher feud not over yet

MELBOURNE (AFP) — Formula One champion Jacques Villeneuve and Michael Schumacher will take their feud from last season into the new championship which starts Sunday.

Villeneuve said here Monday he had not spoken to Schumacher since the German tried to ram him off the circuit at the season-ending European Grand Prix in Jerez, Spain, last October.

"I know my contests with Michael are going to be what a lot of people want to see this season. Well, I am ready for that," Villeneuve told a press conference.

"I'm ready to take on anyone at all who is competitive and I don't care if it is Michael or any other driver."

"I don't give a toss if Michael says this or that, or if he tries to muscle it out with me in some kind of eyeball-to-eyeball way because that stuff does not bother me. And he knows it won't work," he said.

"We are not friends or anything like that anyway



World Formula One drivers' champion Canadian Jacques Villeneuve (L) and Williams teammate Heinz-Harald Frentzen of Germany stand on top of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Villeneuve and Frentzen stopped over in Sydney on their way to Melbourne for the year's first Grand Prix, to be raced on March 8 (Reuters photo)

— despite what some people have said. I am sick of Michael trying to claim that we are. I just see him as another driver — one of the guys I have to beat.

Villeneuve eventually finished third at the European Grand Prix to secure his first world drivers' title.

Schumacher, whose Ferrari became beached in trackside gravel, was subsequently stripped of his second place in the championship by the governing body, the International Automobile Federation

(FIA). "The last time I spoke to him was the Sunday of that race," Villeneuve said. Even then not much was said.

"We did not talk about the race itself or the incident. The only things we have seen are through the media and that's not the perfect way of communication."

Following widespread condemnation of Schumacher's tactics his Ferrari team has tested their cars in Italy in private.

Villeneuve, while highly critical of Schumacher, expects him to again be a main rival.

"I do expect Michael Schumacher to be quick. Ferrari have done a lot of testing with their car so they should be well-prepared for the season.

"They will not have any excuses either this year which is good, too," he added.

The season begins with the Australian Grand Prix at Albert Park circuit on Sunday.

Ginola inspires Spurs to crucial win

LONDON (AFP) — An inspired performance from mercurial Frenchman David Ginola lifted Tottenham to a vital 1-0 Premier League win over fellow relegation strugglers Bolton Wanderers at White Hart Lane on Sunday.

Ginola, who started the move which resulted in Danish midfielder Allan Nielsen scoring the only goal, was at the heart of everything that an increasingly fluent Spurs put together against a feeble and uninspired Bolton — who played their 11th game without a win.

The win put Spurs five points above the bottom three while Bolton look ever more likely to repeat their performance of two years ago by dropping straight back to the first division. They are six points from safety.

"That was our most important win of the season," said Ginola. "Even a point would be a goldmine at this stage but everyone worked really hard and we were rewarded."

Despite his excellent form, which he said he would enjoy more if the team was fighting for the title instead of

against relegation, the 31-year-old Frenchman wasn't certain that national coach Aimé Jacquet is paying him any attention ahead of the World Cup.

"I don't know what he (Jacquet) thinks. I would love to play for my country but at the moment I don't know what the situation is and so I will just carry on helping Spurs escape relegation," he added.

Nielsen, who had just returned from injury, slotted home his third goal of the season in the 44th minute when he shimmied past Andy Todd, son of Bolton manager Colin, and shot right-footed into the far corner past keeper Keith Branagan.

The move, one of the few well executed ones put together by either side in the first half, was started by Ginola inside his own half. He went past three Bolton players and then passed to Clive Wilson on the left wing, whose pinpoint cross set up Nielsen.

Todd then nearly made it worse for his embattled side as he headed the ball close to his own goal from a second-half corner. The ball just shaved

Branagan's right post.

Bolton finally produced a shot of note in the 70th minute as Jimmy Phillips unleashed a vicious curling effort from the edge of the box only for Spurs' keeper Espen Baardens to pull off a fingertip save at the expense of a corner.

The news was almost all good for Spurs on a day when they were able to recall German skipper Jurgen Klinsmann after a broken jaw and also to give a late second-half debut to Algerian international midfielder Moussa Saib, recently signed from Valencia.

"It was the sort of performance that gives us confidence of avoiding relegation," said the club's Swiss manager Christian Gross. "We showed a lot of fighting spirit and I'm confident we can stay up."



Yevgeny Kafelnikov hits a backhand return to France's Cedric Pioline during the final of the ATP indoor tournament at London's Battersea Park. Kafelnikov defeated Pioline 7-5 6-4 (Reuters photo)

Kafelnikov downs Pioline in final

LONDON (AFP) — Third-seeded Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia breezed past Frenchman Cedric Pioline to win Sunday's final of the Guardian Direct Cup at Battersea Park.

The World No.7 beat unseeded Pioline 7-5, 6-4 in a final in which he played mainly from the baseline.

Pioline has a habit of causing surprises, having reached the U.S. Open final in 1993 and the Wimbledon final last year, but has won only two of the 13 finals he has contested.

Kafelnikov, winning his 15th career title, always looked capable of raising his game when it mattered most. "I have played him many, many times and I have only lost once so I had the psychological edge," said Kafelnikov.

Pioline, like Kafelnikov a good-all-court player rather than relying on sheer power, broke the Russian in the eighth game to go into a 5-3 lead and served for the set.

But Kafelnikov seemed to go up a gear and won the next four games for the loss of only three points to take the first set after 38 minutes.

Then, after saving three break points in the fifth game of the second set, the Russian ace trailed 0-40 on his own serve in the following game.



France's Cedric Pioline hits a backhand return to Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov at London's Battersea Park (Reuters photo)

But again he raised his game, hung on to his serve, broke Pioline three games later to lead 5-4 and then served out to love for victory. It was Kafelnikov's ninth

win over Pioline in 10 matches but the Frenchman said: "His record against me had nothing to do with today's result. He just played too well."

SCOREBOARD

NBA New York 101 LA Lakers 89 Indiana 90 Denver 63 Atlanta 101 Vancouver 96 Utah 106 Houston 100 Minnesota 115 Detroit 113 (2nd OT) Seattle 89 Phoenix 87 Cleveland 102 Golden State 82 Boston 102 Portland 101 Miami 85 New Jersey 84			
Spanish football Real Zaragoza 1 Salamanca 1 Merida 3 Real Sociedad 1 Celta Vigo 2 D. La Coruna 1 Athletic Bilbao 2 Sporting Gijon 2 Valladolid 2 Tenerife 1 Oviedo 0 Valencia 0			
English Premiership Tottenham 1 Bolton 0			
Dutch football Groningen 1 Sparta Rotterdam 1 Volendam 4 Willem II Tilburg 1 Utrecht 1 Breda 3 Feyenoord 2 Heerenveen 0			
Romanian football CSM Rostov 3 Gloria Bistrita 1 F. Halceni 0 Farul Constanta 2 Jof Petrosani 1 CSKA Bucharest 4 Omlui Galati 0 Steaua Bucharest 2 FCM Bacau 2 FC Arges 0 FCM Buzau 1 Sporting Cluj 0 FC Buzau 2 FC Cluj 0 FC National 2 U. Cluj 0			
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Bundesliga Hertha Berlin 1 Hansa Rostock 1			
Battersea ATP Tour Singles Final Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Rus) 3-1 Cedric Pioline (Fra) 7-5, 6-4 Doubles Final Martin Damm (Cze)/Jim Grabb (USA) 3-1 Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Rus)/Daniel Vacek (Cze) 6-4, 7-5			
Philadelphia ATP tournament Pete Sampras (USA) 3-1 Thomas Enqvist (Swe) 7-5, 7-6 (7/3)			
Squash Super Series Final Jansher Khan (Pak) 3-1 Simon Parks (Eng) 15-12, 15-15, 15-11, 15-10 Third place Peter Nicol (Sco) 3-1 Mark Chaloner (Eng) 15-9, 15-7 (best of three games only)			
Line WTA Tour Final Jana Novotna (Cze) 1-1 Dominika Van Roost (Bel) 6-1, 7-6 (7/3)			

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Andre Agassi

Agassi, on a comeback, keeps energy level high

SCOTTSDALE (AFP) — Andre Agassi is hoping that one of his favourite stops on the worldwide tennis tour will be the place where he gets a big boost in his 1998 comeback.

The former tennis Number One plays late Monday at the \$340,000 Franklin Templeton Classic here against Spain's sixth seed Alberto Portas.

Agassi, who dropped out of the ATP Tour ranking Top 100 last year when his interest wandered and he lost his focus, has fought back to No. 49, thanks in part to a title two weeks ago in San Jose following a solid showing at the Australian Open.

"I don't think it takes a brain surgeon to figure out my focus was not on my tennis," said the 27-year-old, who turns 28 next month. Tennis "wasn't my top priority."

"But even when you do commit and focus on it, it's hard to get that intensity required to achieve great things," the U.S. tennis star added.

Agassi is unseeded in the first outdoor U.S. event of the spring.

Scottsdale is "one of the

stops that I look forward to each year," Agassi said of the desert venue, which is relatively close to his Las Vegas home. "I love the area, the whole ambience on and off the court. It's a beautiful place to spend time."

Tournament Number One at the Princess resort pits Australian defending champion Mark Philippoussis against qualifier Franco Squillari of Argentina.

Second seed Albert Costa of Spain plays Czech Slava Dosedel, while third-seeded Swede Magnus Norman takes on another Spaniard, Carlos Costa.

The Scottsdale tournament will also be the first time in two years that Boris Becker will play an American event.

The 30-year-old former megastar is closing down his career, and is concentrating on leading the German Davis Cup squad.

Becker opens singles play against compatriot Nicolas Kiefer, seeded fourth, and is plays doubles Monday night with another young German, Thomas Messner. They then take on the Americans Dave Randall and Jack Waite.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Burns on verge of Safari win

NAIROBI (AFP) — Briton Richard Burns was in sight of his first world championship victory after winning the first timed section of the Safari Rally final stage here on Monday. Burns, in a Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution, was 22 seconds faster than his closest rival Ari Vatanen of Finland in a Ford Escort and 6 minutes 23 seconds ahead overall. He led 22 cars out of Nairobi for the final leg which could be a sting in the tail for the leaders as the Safari continued to be unpredictable. Burns said before the start he was not worried of the pressure from the two Fords of Vatanen and Juha Kankkunen. The chasing pack had a host of problems in the 108km 12th special stage between Ngong and Ole Tepesi. Toyota's anticipated attack was marred with trouble. Carlos Sainz of Spain punctured and the left hand side front rim broke in a concrete drift 3km from the end of the section. Team mate Didier Auriol of France also had a puncture in the second Corolla. Despite leaving the rear window on the roadside after hitting a huge bump, Kankkunen still managed to set the second fastest stage time only five seconds behind Burns.

Novotna downs Van Roost

LINZ (AFP) — Top-seeded Jana Novotna scored a straight sets victory over Belgium's Dominique Van Roost in Sunday's final of the \$430,000 dollar WTA Tour event here. The powerful Czech player defeated fourth-seeded Van Roost 6-1, 7-6 (7/2) for her 20th career title. The 29-year-old collected \$79,000 dollars and a \$25,000 dollar diamond necklace for her win. "It has been a tough week, but Linz is marvellous for me," said Novotna, who also won the title here in 1995. Novotna beat Van Roost for the second straight week after a three-set win in Hanover, Germany. Novotna made the final in Hanover before losing to Switzerland's Patty Schnyder.

Runner dies in Rome race

ROME (AFP) — A 24-year-old runner in the Rome-Ostia half-marathon race died of a heart attack just a few hundred metres from the finish here on Sunday. Roberto Bazzoni, an amateur member of a Rome athletics club, died shortly after being rushed by race organisers to a nearby hospital. Meanwhile, a 16-year-old youth, Francesco Geraci, died while playing in a football match near Palermo on Sunday. Geraci collapsed during the game and died on his way to hospital after suffering a suspected heart attack.

Ertl wins World Cup slalom

SAALBACH, Austria (AFP) — Germany's Martina Ertl, who finished a disappointing fourth in both the slalom and giant slalom at the Olympics, gained a measure of compensation here Sunday when she won the evening World Cup slalom. Ertl finished in a time of 1min 36.00secs with Norway's Trine Bakke second and Kristina Koznik of the United States third.

Players demand bigger bonuses

LAGOS (AFP) — Leading Nigerian footballers are set to meet with the Nigerian Football Federation (NFF) and government officials this week to demand bigger win bonuses for this year's World Cup finals. The Super Eagles, who are in Group D with Spain, Paraguay and Bulgaria, will be represented by captain Uche Okechukwu, Daniel Amokachi, Austin "Jay Jay" Okocha and Sunday Oliseh. The players, according to reliable sources, will be demanding for between \$8,000 and \$20,000 each for a win at the finals. Each player was paid \$5,000 for a win during the qualifying rounds of France '98 — they received half that for a draw.

Williams wins first title

OKLAHOMA CITY (AFP) — Third-seeded American teenager Venus Williams, who has been proclaiming that she will be the new World No. 1 before she is much older, won the first title of her career Sunday when she defeated fourth-seeded Joannette Kruger of South Africa in straight-sets in the final of the \$164,250 WTA tournament here.

The powerful Florida-based 17-year-old, who turned professional in October 1994, raced to a 6-3, 6-2 win. The 24-year-old, 27th-ranked Kruger was always under pressure from Williams' big serves and sledge-hammer groundstrokes and never looked likely to cause an upset. Williams had been favourite to win the title after beating World No. 2 Lindsay Davenport in the semi-finals on Saturday.

Ranked 14th in the rankings before arriving at Oklahoma City, Williams was joined on the tour by 16-year-old sister Serena two months ago and the younger player had already shot up into the top-50.



Venus Williams

Top clubs tune-up for European clashes

PARIS (AFP) — Inter Milan kept up the pressure on Italian league leaders Juventus here at the weekend when Ivan Zamorano and Ronaldo secured a 2-0 win over bottom club Napoli while Juventus beat Bari 1-0.

And in Spain, Real Madrid managed to stay one point clear of bitter rivals Barcelona thanks to a 2-0 victory over Majorca — although Barcelona, with two games in hand, will recapture the lead if they win or draw their Monday clash at Racing Santander.

French champions Monaco tuned up for their midweek European Champions League quarter-final clash against Manchester United by beating Marseille 2-0 in a dour first division Riviera derby showdown. And the part-timers of Cinderella club Bourg-Perronnais continued their fairy-tale run and reached the quarter-finals by scoring a shock 2-0 home win over first division Metz.

In Germany, FC Cologne propelled themselves away

from the bottom of the Bundesliga table with a shock 2-0 victory away to titleholders Bayern Munich. The defeat seriously dented Bayern's title aspirations and left them six points adrift of leaders Kaiserslautern who drew 0-0 with Karlsruhe.

While the top Italian clubs were winning their matches, AS Roma ended Fiorentina's four-month unbeaten away run with a crushing 4-1 victory. But Udinese stayed fourth despite slumping to a shock 1-0 defeat at relegation strugglers Empoli.

Real Madrid, who face Bayer Leverkusen in Wednesday's European Cup quarter-final first leg match, beat Majorca 2-0 in Saturday's league clash — but despite two goals from Brazilian star Roberto Carlos and Yugoslav striker Predrag Mijatovic in the opening 35 minutes they squandered a series of chances. Both Basque title aspirants suffered setbacks.

Mid-table Merida beat Real Sociedad 3-1 and bot-

tom club Sporting Gijon held Athletic Bilbao to a 2-2 draw.

Although Sociedad's reverse was bad news for their title hopes, Bilbao's 2-2 draw left Luis Fernandez' side a massive nine points off the pace.

And Bilbao could well have come away from Gijon with no points at all. They needed two second-half goals from Urzail, one of them in the last minute, to force the draw.

Gijon, who have never won a trophy in their 92-year history, looked to be on their way to scoring only their second win of the sea-

son when Tomas slotted home a penalty after just 11 minutes and Russian international striker Dimitri Cherychev made it 2-0 ten minutes later.

Urzail's goals, however, left Gijon with just seven points from 27 matches.

The 1996 champions, Atletico Madrid, were held 2-2 draw at Espanyol, although Italian international striker Christian Vieri scored his 16th of the season to make him the leading scorer in the championship.

Valencia came away with a share of the points at Oviedo after a goalless draw.

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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
TAMMAM HIRSH

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q. 1 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠ 7 8 ♣ A K 7 6 5 2 ♠ 8 5 ♠ 4

The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1NT Pass 3♦ Pass
4♦ Pass 7♦ Pass
What action do you take?

A - Without West's interference, a bid of five hearts would be in order. That suggests interest in slam while holding no first-round control to cue-bid. On this sequence, however, the move toward slam is fraught with danger. West must have a long suit to compete at the three-level, so East may be able to ruff away partner's spade control. Pass, and be content to chalk up a vulnerable game.

Q. 2 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠ Q 5 3 2 ♣ A Q J 9 ♠ Q 8 2 ♠ 7 6

The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1NT Pass 3♦ Pass
4♦ Pass 7♦ Pass
What do you bid now?

A - To understand the answer to this problem, you must realize that, with a five-card heart suit and no more than three spades, you do not use the Stayman Convention — you simply bid three hearts, or transfer into the suit. Therefore, you can now make a cue-bid of four hearts to show your first-round control and slam interest with spades as the agreed suit.

Q. 3 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ 6 9 8 7 4 ♠ A K Q J 10 5 3 2

The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
2♠ Pass 3♦ Pass
4♦ Pass 7♦ Pass
What do you bid now?

A - This is not your hand — you

have little to contribute on defense and partner might have nothing. Therefore, you should make life as difficult as possible for your opponents. We won't fault you for leaping to six clubs, but since there is a chance you might buy the hand at five clubs, bid it.

Q. 4 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ K Q J 8 5 2 ♠ 8 5 ♠ 4 ♠ 6 4

The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1♠ Pass 2♠ Pass
3♠ Pass 4♠ Pass
What do you bid now?

A - This is simply a matter of how many spades you should bid. You have seven sure tricks, but you should discount the possibility of scoring the king of hearts — West probably has the ace. Unless partner can cover several of your potential losers, game is out of reach. Nevertheless, we would jump to three spades to try to buy the contract in our long suit.

Q. 5 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ A J 5 ♠ A K Q 8 3 ♠ A K Q

What is your opening bid?

A - Believe it or not, there is a textbook bid for balanced hands of 25-27 points. Open three no trump or, if that bid is, by partnership agreement, allocated to some other type of hand, start with two clubs followed by three no trump.

Q. 6 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ A K 7 5 ♠ A J 5 4 2 ♠ A K

What is your opening bid?

A - You have only four losers and a plethora of prime cards, but your long suit is shabby. Therefore, we don't think the hand quite measures up to a demand bid. We would open one heart and reverse into spades next.

Ronaldo to make the difference

MILAN (AFP) — Inter Milan and Schalke 04 have agreed on one thing before they meet for their UEFA Cup re-match here on Tuesday — Ronaldo will be the one to watch.

These two sides met in last season's final, with the Germans winning the trophy here after a penalty shoot-out in the second leg. Now they return to San Siro for the first leg of this season's quarter-final.

Schalke's Dutch coach Huub Stevens said: "You can't compare these two matches, Inter have changed their whole team since then."

But he admitted: "It's going to be very difficult for us to repeat that feat. We've got to play very tight and very aggressive, just like we did last time."

"We're the holders, but we're not the favourites in this match. In terms of ability, the average Inter player is better than ours and on top of that, they've got Ronaldo, and not just him."

"They've got so many players who could decide the outcome of the two games."

Ronaldo will be no stranger to Stevens, who was previously coach of Roda Kerkrade and who faced him when the 21-year-old Brazilian played for PSV Eindhoven in the Dutch league in 1994-96.

Schalke's Dutch defender Johan De Kock recalled: "He was very young and inexperienced then. Now he's ruthless and you can't afford to take your eyes off him for a moment."

Inter, who will be without suspended skipper Giuseppe Bergomi, do not need to be reminded about last season's disappointment under Roy Hodgson, now at Blackburn Rovers.

"We haven't got over that final and this is the right moment to take our revenge by knocking them out," said Inter striker Ivan Zamorano.

The Chilean levelled the final 1-1 on aggregate with a late goal but then, along with Dutchman Aron Winter, missed his spot-kick during the penalty shoot-out.

"This time, we've got Ronaldo," said Zamorano, who is desperately hoping to be picked as the Brazilian's strike partner on Tuesday night.

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مركز التجارة العالمي - قطر

Troops kill 100 rebels in western Algeria — paper

PARIS (R) — Algerian troops backed by planes have killed 100 Islamist rebels in the latest military operation centred on a mountainous area in western Algeria, an Algerian newspaper said on Monday.

Government soldiers shot the gunmen last week on the Feloucene mountain in Tlemcen province 440 kilometres west of Algiers, said the pro-government newspaper L'Aurélien.

Planes cleared the way for soldiers to move against the rebels, it said, adding that dozens of dead rebels were buried by comrades on the mountain.

About 30 were killed on Saturday as they tried to break through a security net thrown around the rebel stronghold, the newspaper said.

It did not say whether there were any losses on the government side. The authorities had no comment.

Newspapers have reported that more than 250 rebels have been killed in similar operations elsewhere following a series of recent massacres of civilians.

More than 1,200 civilians, mostly poor villagers, were killed between Christmas and the Holy Month of Ramadan ending late in January. The

government blamed Islamist rebels.

Despite the military operations, rebels are hitting back with ambushes and other attacks in which more than 80 people, including at least 27 soldiers, have been killed in the past two weeks, according to newspapers and official reports.

President Liamine Zeroual, in a rare visit to the violence-ravaged province of Medea where eight people were massacred on Friday, said his government was determined to wipe out the guerrillas he described as bent only on destroying the state and killing its people at random.

Fayed arrested and released by police probing theft allegations

LONDON (AFP) — Egyptian multi-millionaire and Harrods store owner Mohammed Al Fayed was arrested and released on bail Monday after answering police questions about alleged theft and criminal damage.

A spokesman for the tycoon said Mr. Fayed went to a London police station voluntarily.

He was arrested and released on police bail after questioning, pending further inquiries.

The questioning is believed to be in connection with claims by Mr. Fayed's long-standing opponent, fellow tycoon Tiny Rowland, that safe deposit boxes in Harrods had been tampered with.

The two men have been in dispute since Mr. Fayed's

takeover of Harrods in 1985 which was the object of a bitter ownership battle with Mr. Rowland.

A Scotland Yard spokesman confirmed that a "man in his 60s voluntarily attended a London police station — we are not saying which — with his solicitors, by prior appointment, and was arrested."

"He was interviewed by police in connection with allegations of theft and criminal damage."

"After the interview he was released on police bail pending further inquiries."

A spokesman for Mr. Fayed confirmed that the tycoon had gone voluntarily to a police station because he wanted to "bring this matter to speedy conclusion."

He said: "Tiny Rowland has

been mounting an on-going fusillade of allegations against Mr. Fayed. The latest one relates to the safe deposit boxes, and allegations that the boxes have been tampered with."

"He went voluntarily, and he spoke to the police at length. He is now back in business as he should be. He basically wants this thing sorted out."

Mr. Rowland, the former boss of conglomerate LON-RHO, has alleged that Mr. Fayed and his security staff plundered his safe deposit box at Harrods looking for documents that could be used to blackmail him.

He also alleges a cache of emeralds were stolen at the time. All the allegations have been denied by Mr. Fayed.

Israel says Jewish settlers top 161,000

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's interior ministry said on Monday the Jewish settler population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip had reached 161,157 in 1997 — up around nine per cent over the previous year.

A ministry official said the growth rate had remained constant for the last five years. In March 1996, Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics put the Jewish settlement figure at 134,000.

"This is mainly due to natural growth," said Rami Shabo, director of the ministry's information services.

He told Reuters a high birth rate among Jewish settlers accounted for about six per cent of the population

growth. The figure was based on a review of address registrations conducted last October, Mr. Shabo said.

Around 155,000 of the settlers live in the West Bank (excluding Arab east Jerusalem) and 6,000 in the Gaza Strip, the ministry said. Israel occupied both areas in the 1967 Middle East war.

A census published this month by the Palestinian National Authority put the Arab population of the West Bank (including Arab east Jerusalem) and Gaza at 2.9 million.

Most Palestinians live under self-rule but Israel still occupies much of the West Bank and parts of the Gaza Strip. Both sides lay claim to

Arab east Jerusalem which Israel occupied in 1967.

Israel's largest peace group said the figures showed financial incentives had failed to entice large numbers of Israelis to move to Jewish settlements.

"I'm surprised. I thought that in light of the tax breaks and large mortgage loans this government gives people who want to live in settlements, a lot of people would be moving out there," Peace Now leader Moshe Raz told Reuters.

He said the group estimated around 10 per cent of Jews registered as West Bank residents did not really live there but were enjoying government benefits.

Israeli presidential hopefuls vie for votes in close contest

TEL AVIV (AFP) — With 48 hours to go before Israel's parliament elects a head of state, incumbent Ezer Weizman and challenger Shaul Amur scrambled Monday for support from wavering deputies.

Most analysts expect Mr. Weizman, 73, to narrowly win reelection in a second five-year term as president in Wednesday's secret parliamentary ballot.

But the fact he is being challenged is unprecedented for a sitting president in Israel and pundits were not ruling out a possible upset victory for Mr. Amur, 54, a relative unknown from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud Party.

The Yediot Ahronot newspaper reported Monday that Mr.

Weizman had 66 supporters in the 120-member Knesset, as opposed to 34 for Mr. Amur, mayor of a small town in northern Israel and a backbench member of parliament.

Sources close to Mr. Weizman, the opposition Labour Party's candidate, said he would immediately withdraw if the vote resulted in a tie, which the Maariv newspaper said was possible.

Maariv put the tally at 64-56 in favour of Mr. Weizman, but said the outcome was hard to predict accurately as several Likud and Labour deputies were expected to cross party lines during the vote.

The two candidates were said to be vying for the votes of the four deputies from the United Arab List Party, which

has not taken any official position on the election.

"In my opinion, the race is even on both sides," United Arab List member Abdul Wahab Darawshe told Israel Radio.

"We see Shaul Amur as in favour of co-existence but he is from the Likud, which makes it hard for us to vote for him," Mr. Darawshe said.

Weizman is in favour of peace, even though he never granted amnesty to a single Arab prisoner, he said.

Israel Television reported that the two candidates were engaging in political activity never seen before in a presidential race, each promising deputies favours if they agreed to vote for them.

Iraq holds mass funeral for 33 child 'victims' of United Nations sanctions

BAGHDAD (AFP) — The Iraqi capital held a mass funeral Monday for 33 child "victims" of the crippling economic sanctions which the United Nations has enforced on Iraq for the last seven and a half years.

Grieving parents joined Iraqi MPs at the head of the cortege as it wound its way through the city centre to the offices of the U.N. Development Programme (UNDP), a common venue for such protests.

Residents lined the streets as the cortege passed, with each coffin, mounted on top of orange-and-white Baghdad taxis, draped in white and bearing the name and age of a child.

"God is great, this is the injustice of the Americans," chanted the mourners as the procession neared the U.N. building. "There is no God but Allah, America is against God."

Ganureh Daba lost her seven-year-old son Amer.

"He only had diarrhoea," she said. "We don't have medicines, we don't have milk, we have nothing. And for this he died."

Noor Ahmad lost her 12-year-old daughter Widad to kidney failure. All three of her children had diseased kidneys, she said.

Her husband gave one of his own to their elder son Amer, 14, and she is saving hers for her younger son Mohammad, 8, she said. There had been none to spare for little Widad and Iraq no longer had an organ bank.

"Every day, 50 children are dying in Baghdad alone because of the embargo," said Sultan Al Shawi, an MP who joined the mourners at the head of the cortege.

"Throughout Iraq, around 250 are dying. This number has to be added to the one million children who have already died," said the MP who is also chairman of the Iraqi Child Support Society.

"The prolonging of the embargo and the deaths of these children mean simply that the United States is committing genocide against the people of Iraq. This is a crime punishable under international law."

The mourners delivered a petition to the UNDP, which is responsible for monitoring the imports of food and medicine that Iraq is allowed under the "oil-for-food" accord, the sole exemption to a U.N. embargo on Iraqi oil exports.



MOVING THE THEATRE: Bud Abbott, right, and Lou Costello in balloons 'pull' the 3.4 million kilogramme Empire Theatre as it is moved along New York's 42nd Street on Sunday. The relocation should move the theatre 168 feet and was expected to take 6 hours. Abbott and Costello once performed at the Empire (AP photo)

U.N. human rights chief ends Iran visit

TEHRAN (AFP) — The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson has left Iran without meeting Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, as she expected, the U.N. office in Tehran said Monday.

Ms. Robinson, who left late Sunday, was on a two-day visit here to attend a workshop on human rights in the Asia-Pacific region.

She held talks here with several officials, including Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi, and several members of non-governmental organisations.

But she did not meet with Mr. Khatami, a meeting she had understood would take place before visiting here.

Several Iranian newspapers attributed the cancellation to Tehran's displeasure over comments by Ms. Robinson's spokesman, John Mills, who had said the commissioner would raise concerns over Iran's alleged human rights violations.

After meeting with Ms. Robinson late Saturday, Mr. Kharazi accused Western countries of "using the issue of human rights selectively and for political purposes" against the Islamic Republic.

However, the commissioner said Sunday that she had noted an "encouraging trend" in Iran, notably "the desire to discuss issues which would not have been discussed before."

4 injured as students clash in Tehran University rally

TEHRAN (AFP) — Four people were injured in clashes between leftwing university students and Islamists in front of Tehran University on Monday, witnesses said.

The clashes erupted during a rally by around 3,000 students to protest the rejection of several leftwing candidates for the legislative by-elections on March 13.

Police, heavily present on the scene, arrested about a dozen people.

The demonstrators, who support President Mohammad Khatami, carried portraits of Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, his predecessor Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and the president.

"Khatami we support you... You need to be given more authority," the students cried, and referring to the Islamists, they shouted: "Down with American Islam... Down with the Taliban brand of Islam," in allusion to the hardline Afghan faction.

The Council of the Guardians, a conservative legislative watchdog, has reportedly rejected several leftwing supporters of President Khatami in the run-up to the by-elections, prompting criticism from left-leaning circles.

Hopefuls are tightly screened by the council to ensure they meet the ideological and moral requirements.

Border guard, 9 rebels killed in border clash

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Iranian border guard and nine rebels of the People's Mujahadeen were killed in clashes along the frontier with Iraq, the official Iranian news agency IRNA reported Monday.

The fighting took place Sunday when a group of rebels tried to infiltrate into Iran through the Mehran border point, in Ilam province, and carry out "sabotage activities" in the nearby Shur-Shirin region.

"But they fell into a trap before succeeding," IRNA said, citing an intelligence ministry report from Ilam.

Nine members of the People's Mujahadeen, Iran's main armed opposition group based in Iraq, were killed and "several others" wounded. One border guard was "martyred."

A number of weapons, including Kalashnikovs and RPG-7s, were seized.

The ministry accused the Iraqi regime of helping the rebels in their operation.

It did not refer to a claim Monday by the Mujahadeen that dozens of fighters had been killed on Sunday as Iranian forces launched a cross-border attack on opposition bases inside Iraq.

The People's Mujahadeen said five of its fighters died as well as "dozens of enemy agents" after Iranian Revolutionary Guards militiamen and interior ministry forces launched the attack on Sunday.

The raid targeted two Mujahadeen bases near the small Iraqi town of Tarsaq along the central sector of the border, it said. The bases were attacked with 82mm mortars.

In a simultaneous attack on Sunday, Iranian forces fired RPG-18 rockets at a patrol of the People's Mujahadeen near the city of Kut, also along the central sector of the border, the Mujahadeen said.

The Mujahadeen "opened fire on the terrorists who fled before firing all their rockets. None of the rockets hit their targets and none of the combatants was harmed," it said.

On Sept. 29, Iranian warplanes attacked Mujahadeen bases inside Iraq, triggering a protest from Baghdad which called for the lifting of a Western-patrolled "no-fly zone" over the south of the country.

Tehran said the air raids were launched in retaliation for Mujahadeen cross-border attacks.

Norway rejects Europe criticism over Palestinian territories' economic slide

OSLO (AFP) — Norway on Monday rejected criticism from the European Union (EU) over the lack of economic development in the self-rule Palestinian territories, where Norway chairs a committee of 40 donor countries.

In a recent report, the EU criticised the negative economic development of Gaza and the West Bank since 1993, when the donor group pledged to raise \$3.5 billion over a period of five years to assist the economic development of the region.

The EU concludes in its report that since 1993, unemployment in the Palestinian territories has doubled from 20 to 42 per cent, private investments have been reduced by 75 per cent, and trade deficits due

to border closures and lack of economic growth amount to almost \$300,000 a year.

"This is the same old melody again from the EU," Norwegian foreign ministry press spokesman Ingvald Havnen said on Monday.

"We admit short-comings, but the situation is far from being as bleak and negative as shown in the EU report," Svein Selvig, the diplomat heading Norway's representation office in Gaza, said in a comment.

Due to the stalled peace process, Mr. Selvig said, focus has been placed on short-term activities.

"Much of the funding has been channelled towards projects that will be prosperous for the Palestinians in the future," Mr. Selvig said.

Norway has chaired the committee since the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestinians were signed in 1993. The EU has long wanted to take over Norway's role — an idea the two parties, Israel and the Palestinians, have rejected.

The EU is by far the main contributor of economic aid to the Palestinians.

The Norwegian government has pledged \$133 million over five years, making it the biggest donor measured per capita.

Norway was given the task to chair the donor committee in 1993, as a tribute to the important role played by the Norwegian government in helping hammering out the peace accord between the Israelis and Palestinians.

Cook to lead series of EU visits to PNA, Israel

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Britain's Foreign Secretary Robin Cook will kick off a series of visits this month by European leaders to the Palestinian territories and Israel, officials said Monday.

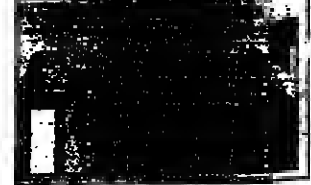
Mr. Cook, whose government currently heads the 15-nation European Union (EU), will meet Palestinian leaders in Gaza City on March 17, said Nabil Shaath, the Palestinian minister for international cooperation.

Mr. Cook will be followed to Gaza on March 18 by Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro and on Mar. 20 by Austrian President Thomas Klestil, Mr. Shaath said.

All three European officials were also due to visit Israel, but the foreign ministry in Jerusalem was unable to immediately provide dates and details of their trips.

Britain has said it planned to use its six-month stint as EU president, which began in January, to heighten European involvement in efforts to break the year-old deadlock in Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

Mr. Shaath said Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa would also visit Gaza City March 18-19 for a meeting of the Palestinian-Egyptian cooperation committee.



'L.A. Confidential' beats 'Titanic' at Chicago film awards

CHICAGO (AFP) — It was a good night for "L.A. Confidential" at the 10th annual Chicago film awards, but box-office hit "Titanic" sank with just two minor awards. The noli thriller "L.A. Confidential" won best picture, Curtis Hanson won for best director and also, with Brian Koppelman, for best screenplay, while "Titanic" won only for best cinematography and best original score. In the other major categories, Robert Duvall won best actor award for "The Apostle" and Judi Dench took home the best actress prize for "Mrs. Brown."

Dole wants wife to run for president

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Failed presidential candidate Bob Dole is encouraging his wife, American Red Cross President Elizabeth Dole, to run for president in 2000. Newsweek reported. She's telegenic, media-savvy, and moderate enough to have wide appeal, he fears that politics is so nasty that she could end up badly scarred. Friends told the weekly magazine, "She'd be a formidable candidate," moderate Republican Governor George Voinovich of Ohio told Newsweek.

South African zoo hosts bug barbecue

JOHANNESBURG (R) — The Johannesburg zoo on Sunday held its annual insect exhibition where members of the public not only got to view creepy-crawlies, but also to eat them. The exhibition, aimed at increasing awareness about the role of insects in the environment, featured some 5,000 examples. A big attraction was the outdoor barbecue, which boasted everything from fried termites coated in chocolate to mopani worm hamburgers. The chocolate termites went down well with the youngsters and there were takers for the mopani worms, which are thick brown worms found in South Africa's northern province Bushveld.

Italian mafioso's love of song leaves him handcuffed

SAN REMO (AFP) — A mafioso who took time off from his 10-year flight from Italian prosecutors to attend Italy's popular San Remo song festival was finally caught by police. In spite of the Sicilian arrest warrant served on him, Roberto Giacometti, 47, decided to indulge his passion for song and checked into a swanky four-star hotel in the Italian seaside resort close to the French border. After three days of touring the town in glitzy style, unaware that police were hot on his trail, Giacometti was nabbed as he made his way to the festival venue.

Mexican woman has six, not nine, babies

MEXICO CITY (R) — A woman who caused a sensation earlier this year when her doctor said she was pregnant with nine babies gave birth on Saturday to six, hospital officials in Mexico City said. "At 2:30 p.m. she gave birth to six babies, three boys and three girls," said hospital spokeswoman Maria Eugenia Gutierrez. "All are in good health." Doctors originally thought Cristina Hernandez, 28, was carrying nine fetuses, but later they said subsequent tests showed seven.

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